

Reminiscences, memoirs, and lectures of Monsignor A. Ravoux, V. G.

Reminiscences, Memoirs —AND— Lectures —OF— MONSIGNOR A. RAVOUX, V. G.

ST. PAUL, MINN. Brown, Treacy & Co., Printers and Publishers. 1890.

BX4705 .R37A3

This book is divided into three parts:

I. Memoirs and Reminiscences

II. Lectures

III. Miscellany

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G. E. M. May 3/23

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Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.

Reminiscences and Memoirs.

No. I. A. D. 1838, Father Ravoux was induced to leave France for the Missions of America—His First Mission was at Prairie du Chien January, 1840— sent amongst the Sioux—1841 and 1842 vested Traverse des Sioux, Little Rock, Lac 201 Parle, Lake Traverse, etc.

Father A. Ravoux was born A. D. 1815, January 11, at Langeac in Auvergne, France, about twenty miles from Puy, where he spent three years in the Petit Seminaire and four years in the Grand Seminaire. R. Rev. M. Loras, previously pastor of the Cathedral Church of Mobile, Alabama, having been consecrated in 1837, Bishop of Dubuque, Iowa, before visiting his diocese, went to France in order to have a few missionaries and some pecuniary means for his poor and new diocese.

Early in the spring of 1838 he visited the Grand Seminaire of Puy, and delivered before the seminarians an urgent invitation, in order to induce some of them to accompany him

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to America. Deeply moved by the discourse and tears of the good Bishop of Dubuque, whom he had never seen or heard of before, l'abbe A. Ravoux, then a sub-deacon, offered himself to him for the missions of his diocese. In September, 1838, they left France for the United States, and after forty-five days' navigation they reached New York. The Rt. Rev. Bishop was accompanied also by his Vicar General, Father Cretin, by Rev. A. Pelamourges, who in 1858 was appointed Bishop of St. Paul (but declined accepting the charge), by l'abbe Galtier, who gave to our city its name, and by two other sub-deacons. The four sub-deacons were ordained deacons in Dubuque the 1st of November, 1839, and priests the 5th of January, 1840.

A few days after, Father Ravoux was sent to Prairie du Chien where he exercised the holy ministry till September, 1841, when he received from his bishop the commission of visiting the Sioux being in the northern part of the diocese of Dubuque, in order to see if there was any prospect of establishing a mission among them. He left Prairie du Chien for the upper Mississippi, spent a few days with his friend, Father Galtier, was then invited to go in a canoe to Traverse des Sioux, accepted the invitation with many thanks, and after four or five days arrived at Traverse. He was there the guest of Mr. Provencal, an old and respectable gentle man, who had been a trader with the Indians for about forty-five years. During this sojourn, l'abbe Ravoux taught the catechism to Mr. Provencal's children, and Prepared them for the reception of the sacraments of the church, and applied himself to the study of the Sioux language, being persuaded that so long as he could not instruct the Indians himself very little success could be expected.

However, he did not neglect to announce to them the word of God by interpreters when he had an opportunity to do so. On Christmas day he baptized two adults and three children; he had baptized five more some time before. December 26th, 1841, he left Traverse des Sioux, and two days after he was the guest of Mr. J. Laframboise, at Little Rock, on the Minnesota River, where he remained about four weeks.

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Towards the end of January, 1842, in company with some half-breeds and French Canadians he started for Lac qui Parle, and on the second of February, 1842, he had the 3 pleasure of being welcomed by Mr. Rinvile and his family, and by a few French Canadians. After having passed there two or three months, performing the same duties as at Traverse and Little Rock, he returned early in the spring to Mendota where he spent the greater part of the summer with his friend, Father Galtier. During that summer Rev. L. Galtier visited the Catholics living at Lake Pepin and on the Chippewa River; meanwhile Father Ravoux attended the missions of Mendota and St. Paul, taught the catechism in Sioux to the Messrs. Frenieres' families who were encamped for several weeks near the church at Mendota. At their invitation he accompanied them to Lake Traverse, being by them informed that he would find there several hundred families of Sioux who would be glad to see him and hear the good tidings of the Gospel. Unfortunately, when they reached the place, the Indians, four or five families excepted, had already left for their winter expedition. He spent about two weeks near the bank of the lake, baptized many persons belonging to the families of the Frenieres, and returned to Mendota.

Messrs. J. B. Faribault, Oliver Faribault and his brother David, urged on Father Ravoux to begin a permanent mission at Little Prairie (now Chaska) where Mr. J. B. Faribault had his trading post for the Sioux, and where his two sons, Oliver and David, lived with their families, and a few others. Father Ravoux followed their advice and went to Little Prairie. They were all very kind to him and helped him as interpreters when he had to speak to the Indians, and also when he wrote in the Sioux language a short catechism, the daily prayers, some canticles and a few instructions.

In the spring of 1843, he went to Dubuque to see the Right Rev. Bishop Loras, who gave him some encouragement; then he left Dubuque for Prairie du Chien, where he spent almost two months, and printed, with a small printing press belonging to Very Rev. J. Cretin, a book in the Sioux language, and then returned to his mission.

In the months of January, February, and March, 1844, twenty-three Indians and half-breeds received the sacrament of baptism, but, unfortunately for that new mission, Rev. L. 4 Galtier was, in the spring of the same year, removed from Mendota to Keokuk, and Father Ravoux had to take his place until another priest would be sent from Dubuque. Right Rev. Bishop Loras had promised to send one after a short time, but, though he renewed again and again his promise, he could not fulfill it; and so Father Ravoux had under his charge Mendota, St. Paul, Lake Pepin, St. Croix, till the second of July, 1851, when Right Rev. Bishop Cretin arrived in St. Paul.

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No. II. 1842—A Great Fight between the Chippeways and the Sioux at Kaposia, (Little Crow Village) and on the other side of the Mississippi River—Father Ravoux, to fulfil his duty, went immediately to Kaposia—What he saw—What he heard—Great Lamentation, etc.—Some fifteen White Families living at St. Paul and on the East Side of the River, near the Indian Village fled away and assembled at the Island crossed by the Wabasha Street Bridge to save their Lives—A Messenger sent to Fort Snelling—Soldiers were sent in a Barge to protect them and Peace was restored—In September, 1842, with the Frenieres' Families he made a Journey to Lake Traverse—Many Troubles and Difficulties—Preparations for a fight with the Chippeways, etc.

During the summer of 1842, while standing at the foot of the hill, near the log church of Mendota, I saw several Sioux Indians carrying their guns, and running as fast as possible. "Toki da?" "Whither dost thou go?" said I to one of them, who was not only running very fast, but jumping about like a deer. "Raraton Dakota ktepi." (Raraton the Chippeways, Dakota the Sioux, ktepi kill.) "The Chippeways are killing the Sioux," was his reply, and he did not stop.

A little later I was told that the Chippeway warriors had come in great number, near Little Crow's village, and had killed several Sioux, and that the fight was not yet over. I learned

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also that all the Indians of the village were in danger of being massacred, because almost all the men were intoxicated, or under the influence of liquor. Some messengers, however, had been sent to Black Dog village, and to other places farther up along the St. Peter River (now the Minnesota 6 River), to let them know the sad state of affairs at Kaposia. Such news electrified the Sioux, and they ran immediately to the place of slaughter, to repulse the common enemy, or to die with their friends and relations.

They were indeed aroused by a noble sentiment—sentiment which God has implanted in the heart of man towards his people, his friends and relations, and which will never be extinguished, except, perhaps, in the heart of the brute, who says: “There is no God.”

The situation of the poor Indians at Kaposia saddened me very much, and brought into my mind my sacerdotal obligations. “Several men, women and children, unbaptized, are now perhaps dying at Little Crow's village; thither I must go,” said I to myself; “if I would baptize only one child before his death my trouble would be well rewarded.” I had no horse, but I could then walk seven or eight miles without any difficulty. I took information about the road to Kaposia, and started. I went on one mile, when I saw before me two roads, and I took the wrong one. I came down the hill, and proceeded along the Mississippi towards St. Paul, until perceiving my mistake, I returned to the place of the two roads, and this time went right.

The sun was setting when I reached Little Crow's village where I heard great lamentations and mourning. Many beloved ones had been killed, some others had been wounded, and were in danger of death. Parents, relatives and friends wept bitterly, and made the air resound with these words: “My son is dead!” “My brother is dead!” etc., and repeated the same again and again. Their hearts bleeding with grief and sorrow made them cry in the most lamentable and pitiful manner; and they refused to be comforted, because many beloved ones were no more. Kaposia was then like Rama after the massacre of the children ordered by Herod, and executed by his cruel soldiers. “*Vox in Rama audita est*,

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ploratus et ululatus multus: Rachel plorans filios suos, et noluit consolari quia non sunt.”—Matt. 11, 18.—and Jeremias xxxi, 15.

I visited the wounded, but as I could not explain well in the Sioux language the principal doctrines of our holy faith, I had to procure an interpreter. I crossed in a canoe to the opposite side of the Mississippi, where I got for my interpreter a half-breed Sioux, and went back to Kaposia with him. We visited the wounded, instructed them in our holy faith, as much as circumstances permitted, and baptized two of them. At half-past ten o'clock my interpreter wished to go home and invited me to leave the village with him, telling me that it was dangerous for me to pass the night there. I refused to comply with his request, fearing that some of the wounded might die during the night, and I desired to be present in order to help them to make a good preparation for death. He went home, and I spent the night in the village, where lamentation and mourning had no end.

In the morning, before I left Kaposia, I saw a few Indians mutilating the corpse of a Chippeway warrior. That scene inspired me with horror, and I went to another place. On the same day, across the river at Pig's Eye, I saw the body of a Sioux woman who had been killed in the garden of F. Gamelle, her husband. A small piece of her scalp had been cut off and carried away by the Chippeways.

Little Crow, the chief of the village, lost three of his sons, and a fourth one, being wounded, was in danger of death. He became enraged against the few families that lived at Pig's Eye, almost opposite Kaposia. He complained that they had given no information to the Sioux of the arrival of the Chippeway warriors, though they could have done it, and prevented the disaster he had suffered. It was, no doubt, an error, but exasperated by his misfortune, and being under such an impression, he gave orders to destroy all these families the following day, in the morning; so I was told. Whether it was a fact or a rumor only, all these families, except a half-breed family, fled away and came to the Mississippi Island situated two or three hundred yards from the St. Paul and Sioux City freight depot. The few families living then at St. Paul took also refuge in the same island. During the

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night Isaac Labiasonniere went to Fort Snelling to ask prompt assistance in order to prevent the massacre of some fifteen families encamped on the island. 8 Troops were sent down the river without delay. Order and confidence were re-established.

I visited several times Little Crow's village before starting with the Frenieres for Lake Traverse, where I spent some days in the fall of 1842, as I have already mentioned.

Whilst I was there, some Chippeway warriors, who were probably encouraged by the fight which had taken place near Kaposin, came to Lake Traverse in the expectation of killing some Sioux and carrying away their scalps. They caused us much trouble during three or four days; some of the Sioux had to watch day and night to prevent any attack by surprise. Our situation cannot be well understood, except by making a statement of the position we occupied, and of our small number to protect ourselves against, perhaps, a strong force.

Near the bank of the lake, the Frenieres had erected a log house, which they used as a store and a dwelling house, two or three hundred feet further four or five Sioux families had their tepees, and I had planted my tent some six hundred yards from the lake, near a ravine well timbered. My tent was surrounded with small trees and bushes. Hippolyte Martin, living now two miles from Mendota, then an employe of the Frenieres, passed the night in my tent.

On a certain day some of the Frenieres spoke about having seen or heard a person in the ravine, and after inquiries they had strong reason to believe that the Chippeways had come there. Before dark I made a good fire near my tent, took a book in my hand and read it for a good while, when I heard some persons advancing toward me in such a manner that it was easy for me to understand that they did not wish me to be aware of it. Having come at a distance of about fifty feet from me, near a small creek, which they did not cross, but where they stood hidden in the bushels, I think they leaned upon their guns, because I heard dry leaves cracking, when they laid them to the ground. I immediately stirred the fire, put my crucifix on my breast, that they might see it. Now, said I to myself,

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if they fire upon me they will know that I am not a Sioux, but a Blackgown. I took again my book and continued to read. A short time after H. Martin came across the bushes, and smiling, told me that at the house they had said he would find me the prisoner of some Chippeways. "Well," I replied, "there are some Chippeways very near us and who, no doubt, will attack the Sioux during the night, if they are unaware of it. Stay here for a short time to prevent all suspicion, and then when you shall have crossed the bushes run as fast as possible to the Frenieres and let them know what I told you." He followed my advice, and a few minutes after, I walked also across the bushes, and when on the prairie I ran speedily to the Frenieres, where I saw all the men loading their guns, and learned that the Sioux also had been informed of the danger.

They watched all the night and no Chippeway made his appearance. Early in the morning a Sioux came to me smiling and said to me: "Blackgown, you have played a trick on us." Not at all, was my answer, I am certain that if you go a little farther than my tent, you will see in the ground the footsteps of some Chippeways. A few of them went thither and came back a short time after, convinced that I had told them the truth.

They began immediately to dig a hole in the prairie about twenty-five feet in circumference, and when the work was completed, it was some five feet deep. They planted branches all around to hide the warriors, when firing on the enemy.

Three days after, walking near the ravine I heard coming towards me some persons, whom I supposed to be the Chippeways, because I had seen no Sioux nor half-breed going in that direction. I ran to the Frenieres to whom I gave the alarm, and through them to the Sioux. Preparations were immediately made to repulse the enemy, who might have been as numerous as the Chippeway warriors who fought the Sioux near Kaposia. The Frenieres, Hippolyte Martin and myself went in the log house. They secured the door and put against it several bales and blankets to stop the balls. A few holes were made between the logs to fire upon the Chippeways. H. Martin standing by the door with an axe in his hands was certain that if the Chippeways would come in great numbers, and break the

door, he could 10 at least dispatch two of them, before they could do any harm to us. Orders were given by the old gentleman, F. Freniere, not to open the door to anybody until the fight would be over, and the Chippeways should have retired. But as soon as they began firing, he threw aside the bales of blankets and opened the door; he had some of his relations outside, and he could not himself.

Since our arrival at Lake Traverse, I had baptized six small children, and four adults. These four new Christians, and all the others who were inn the house, united their fervent prayers with mine, and we all put our confidence in God for any event which would take place. How pious! how devout we are in time of danger! The Atheist himself, according to Cicero, the Roman orator, becomes then pious and cries out: "O God, save me!" We were yet addressing our supplications to heaven when the Sioux saw some Chippeways coming out of the brush, and fired upon them. The Chippeways fled away and came no more. *Deo gratias.*

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No. III. 1843—Father Ravoux Journeys from Mendota to Dubuque, with the Mail-carrier, who carried the Mail on his back—Principal Stations—Point Douglas—Red Wing—Lake Pepin—Wabasha—La Riviere des Embarras (now Zumaro River)—White River—Winona—Trempe a L'eau, (now Trempeleau)—Bad Axe River—Danger to be Drowned on Good Friday, etc.

April 3, 1843, the small-carrier, who carried the mail on his back, and I, (Father Ravoux), left Mendota, and on that day traveled a few miles only. The second day we reached Point Douglas, started early the morning of the 5th, and just at twelve o'clock we were at Red Wing, where we dined, having a good appetite, as we had already traveled twenty-seven or twenty-eight miles afoot. After dinner we resumed our way on the river, went on about a mile, but had to come back to Red Wing; the day being fine and warm, there was too much water on the ice, and we could not proceed any further. We traveled by land the whole afternoon, and it was not without much fatigue that we reached a place on the

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bank of Lake Pepin, about fifteen miles distant from Red Wing. The next day we arrived at Wabasha.

April 8, before leaving Wabasha, we had been informed that we would find no difficulty in crossing the Desembroi River; but it was not so, the river was high and there was no canoe in which we could pass over. My traveling companion then said to me: "Father, I will have to go back to Wabasha for a canoe; will you return with me to Wabasha, or, if you prefer to stay here, I will make a fire for you, and I hope to be back this afternoon, or tomorrow morning?" 12 "Well," said I, "better for me to remain here, I will recite my office, and take care of our little baggage." He made a fire, started off, and did not return until the afternoon of the following day.

Though alone, time had passed rapidly enough. I had under my eyes two beautiful rivers, a clear sky, a good fire, and nothing to disturb my mind. It is then that the voice of nature is easily heard and understood. "The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declares the work of His hands" (Ps. xviii). "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy face" (Ps. cxxxviii)? "Thy hands have made me, and formed me; give me understanding, and I will learn Thy commandments" (Ps. cxviii). "And I will keep Thy word, for Thou, O Lord Jesus, has said: if any one will love Me he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and We will make our abode with him" (John xiv). How sweet and delightful are these thoughts to a Christian heart reflecting on them in the solitude? How powerful to stir up the soul of the Catholic missionary when he recites the divine office, and especially when, every morning, he addresses to his Creator the touching and sublime canticle of the three children of Israel in the furnace: "*Benedicite omnia opera Domini, Domino,*" etc.. "All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord: praise and exalt Him above all forever," etc. (Daniel iii, 57).

April 9, at two o'clock in the afternoon, I saw my traveling companion coming down the Mississippi River in a canoe. As soon as he had arrived, the mail and our little baggage were thrown into the canoe, and we resumed our journey by water. We went on a few

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miles without obstruction, and we were very much pleased with our new mode of traveling; but we soon perceived that all our troubles were not yet over, for a little farther we were stopped by the ice, and it was with much labor that we landed on an island where we passed the whole night without fire. In the morning we crossed on the ice to the bank of the river in Iowa Territory. Before taking our breakfast, we stood on the shore of Mineiska river, and we had ford about three feet of very 13 cold water in order to get across. When we had arrived at Winona, which was then a prairie without inhabitants, we thought we would meet there the mail-carrier from Prairie du Chien; but he had not yet come, and my companion had to bring the mail to Trempeleau where he expected we would arrive before dark. Vain expectation! We passed the night on the bank of the river, and not until the next morning did we dare to attempt to cross. At Trempeleau the two mail-carriers met and exchanged the mails. Two or three families only, lived in that place.

It was impossible, for two days, to travel by land or by water; but on God Friday, the 14th of April, we started for Prairie du Chien in a canoe, with the expectation that we would arrive there before Easter Sunday. We had scarcely come down the river three or four miles when we were entrapped by floating cakes of ice, which, piling up in great quantity, had become jammed, making the river rise and placing us in dangerous circumstances. As we found that all our endeavors to open a passage for our canoe were useless, we prayed to God for relief. It was during the time of Lent, time of prayer and penance; it was on Good Friday, a day especially consecrated to the meditation of the Passion of Jesus Christ. These thoughts came into my mind, and I manifested them to my companion by words, spoke of the resignation of Jesus to the will of His Father: "He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. For which cause God hath exalted Him and hath given Him a name which is above every name." (Phil. ii).

What a beautiful example of resignation! What glory hath the Eternal Father bestowed of His beloved Son for His voluntary sacrifice upon the cross! What powerful encouragement for all those who suffer! How consoling to reflect upon such subjects, to him who is in

danger of being buried under the water, or being crushed under a pile of ice on the bank of a river.

In our distress we invoked also Mary, the mother of the afflicted, we recited the Rosary, and Glory be to God! immediately after, a narrow passage was open, just permitting the canoe to reach the shore without difficulty.

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We had, however, to wait until Saturday morning before being able to proceed any farther. The night was cold, we had no fire, and I could not sleep. We started early in the morning, and we took our breakfast at Mr. Labathe's winter trading post, where we had to leave our canoe, and then we traveled until six o'clock, took our supper in a place where Bad Axe River empties into the Mississippi River, borrowed there a bark canoe, and started off again for Prairie du Chien.

The river was high, the current very strong, and we went on very fast, which caused me great pleasure, because I desired very much to celebrate Mass on Easter Sunday. At 11 o'clock, again new anxiety, new trouble and fear. My companion, Mr. Xavier Desmarais, who guided the canoe, was almost overcome by sleep, and gave such shakings to it, that I feared he would upset it, or break it by running it against some floating trees. "Xavier," said I to him, "what is the matter? What is the cause of such shakings of our canoe?" "I fall asleep." "Let us land and stop to prevent some accident!" "Oh, Father! let us go a little farther; to-morrow, it will be Easter Sunday. We proceeded a little farther, but when I saw that the danger was more and more imminent I requested him to land, and so he did. We took a rest of two hours on an island, then we started again, and after six or seven hours of navigation we arrived at Prairie du Chien. When I reached the church, the first Mass being over, I said the High Mass, at the request of the Very Rev. Father Cretin, with whom I had the great pleasure of spending one day.

Monday morning, accompanied by an Indian, I started for Dubuque, where we expected to arrive on the same day, by water, in a bark canoe. The wind was very strong and contrary, and we had to pass one night on the bank of the river. The next morning I was welcome by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Loras and other friends. *Deo gratias.*

15

No. IV. 1845—Father Ravoux Journeys across the Prairies to the mouth of Vermilion River which Empties into the Missouri River—First Day he traveled alone on Horse-back as far as Belle Plaine where he took his Rest during the night of the Prairie—Second day he reached Traverse des Sioux and found a Companion for his Journey—Paul Royaume—Good Guide, good Hunter, etc..

Having been informed that several Catholic families lived on the Missouri River, near the mouth of Vermilion River, on the seventh or eighth of August, 1845, after having placed myself under the protection of heaven by reciting the Breviary Itinerarium, I got on horse-back and started alone for Traverse des Sioux, where I was to take a guide for that long journey. I had no trouble in crossing Credit River, and the swamps or marches then surrounding it. Once, two years before, my horse—or rather Mr. Oliver Faribault's horse, a beautiful animal, worth \$250 or \$300, which he had lent me with reluctance, fearing some mishap at the crossing of the swampy places, fell so far down into a marsh near the river, that I thought he could never get out of it; but, thanks be to God, the horse was saved. Another time, when the river was very high, I had to cross it by swimming over three times in less than fifteen minutes. As it would have been imprudent to endeavor to get across such a torrent on horse-back, I made my pony cross the river, and then I swam over to the opposite side; but as soon as the mischievous animal saw me ready to take hold of him, he re-crossed the river, and I had to do the same, and to return by swimming over again.

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On the first day, I went as far as Belle Plaine, passed the night on the prairie, and the next day arrived at Traverse des Sioux, where I baptized a child of Mr. Provencal. There

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I found a good young man, who had been, for some years, traveling in the Missouri River Valley. He promised to bring me to Vermilion, and to return with me to Mendota, for a small remuneration. If he is yet living, may God bless him; if he is no more in this world, *requiescat* in pace. His name was Paul Royaume.

From Traverse des Sioux we proceeded to Little Rock, near Fort Ridgely, where we bought a cart and some provisions, etc., and then we crossed the Minnesota River, and traveled west along the northern side of Sleepy Eye Creek, and of Cottonwood River; thence to Pipestone quarry. A few miles farther we saw grazing, on a beautiful prairie, a fine herd of buffaloes, which seemed enjoying happiness to the full extent of their instinct. In the desert such a sight elevates the mind of a man to God, the Creator, the Preserver, the Benefactor of all creatures. "The Lord is sweet to all" says David, "and His tender mercies are over all His works." And he adds: "The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord and thou givest them meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and fillest with blessing every little creature." Who, reflecting on these moving expressions of the prophet, would not follow his example and exclaim with him: "My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless His Holy name for ever, yea, for ever and ever" (Ps. cxliv. 9, 15, 16, 21).

The day after, my companion killed a buffalo near Sioux River Falls, where we stopped, made a fire, prepared, and took a good dinner. We had yet to travel sixty or sixty-five miles, before arriving at Vermilion, where lived four or five families, with whom I passed a few days, gave them some instructions, and baptized five children.

We took another direction in returning to Mendota; the distance we travelled was no less than 350 miles, and we had to make our way through many swamps, ravines, creeks, rivers, and woods. We camped one night in a place where we saw thousands of buffaloes; and we were very much annoyed by the barking of prairie dogs, or wolves, that followed them.

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When we left Vermilion Mr. Henri Ange, a half-breed, accompanied us some twenty-five miles to a camp of Sioux, with whom we passed several hours. They were pleased to see me, and I was much more pleased to be with them, in order to announce to them the truths of the Christian religion. We were invited to a repast, which we honored with a good appetite, as travelers on the prairie generally do. We were scarcely out of our host's tepee, when a strong voice was heard saying: "Shina Sapa, nichopi" (Black Gown, they call for you). I asked Mr. Ange the reason why I was called for. His answer was, that it was another invitation to a little feast, to another repast, and that, in order to treat me well, and with distinction, they had killed a dog, though they had plenty of good venison. Not willing to offend them, I accepted the invitation, and found in our new host's tepee the principal men of the camp. They presented to me a wooden dish containing three or four pounds of meat which our host had cut in small morsels in order to spare me the trouble of having to use the knife. I took two or three of them, and no more. "Friend," said our host to me, "why do you not eat?" I excused myself by answering that I had already taken my dinner, and that it was not possible for me to eat any more. He was surprised at my answer; and pointing out with his finger to a kettle, large enough to contain over one hundred pounds of meat, he replied: "Four or five of us could eat all the meat and drink all the broth that that kettle would hold." The repast being over, I spoke myself to them and also through an interpreter on the principal truths of our holy religion, which they listened to with great attention.

That duty being performed, I expressed my thanks to Mr. Ange and to the Indians for their kindness towards me, and we parted. Without much difficulty we traveled as far as the Des Moines River, to a point which is almost due east of Vermilion, and at a distance of 140 or 150 miles from it, and about fifty miles from the Iowa and Minnesota boundary line, due north. We had some trouble in getting our 18 cart up the bank of the opposite side of the river. Our two horses, my companion and myself worked in vain for half an hour and without prospect of success. Paul became discouraged, impatient and a little excited. "We must leave that cart in the bed of the river and go on," said he to me. "Well, Paul, let us

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have a little patience, and let us try some other means; let us take off the two wheels.” So we did, and in a few minutes we had the three parts of the cart on the bank of the river, and five minutes more suffered to see our cart again moving on the prairie.

The day previous to the feast of the Holy Cross, September 13th, my horse hurt one of my feet, when I was helping him to cross a swampy place, which lamed me for three or four days. On the 14th, after having crossed one of the tributaries of the Minnesota River, we had before us a hill so steep that we had to leave our cart there. These two days were for me days of disappointment and distress; but I found, however, relief and comfort when reading the divine office prescribed by the Church for the feast of the Holy Cross, and for the evening previous to it, and especially in these words: “*O Crux, ave, spes unica,*” etc., or, in English: “Hail, holy Cross! Hail mournful tree! Our hope, with Christ, is nailed on thee; Grant to the just increase of grace, And every sinner's crime efface.”

And in further reading the following verse of another hymn: *Pange lingua gloriosi,*” etc.. The same in English: “Sing, O my tongue! devoutly sing The glorious laurels of our king; Sing the triumphant victory Gained on a cross erected high; Where man's Redeemer yields his breath, And dying, conquerz hell and death.”

Can a Christian ponder on these words and be yet unwilling to carry the cross, and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, who carried it on his shoulders to Mount Calvary, and died upon it?

During two or three days we went on, scarcely knowing what direction to take. But when from the top of the hills of Mankato we saw the Minnesota River Valley, all our troubles were over. From Mankato to Mendota nothing happened worthy to be mentioned. *Deo gratias.*

19

No. V. 1847—Father Ravoux again crossed the Prairies with a small Caravan and went to Port Pierre, on the Missouri River—Do not forget your Compass when you

Travel on the Prairies—False Alarm—Insult borne with Patience—Danger of a Fight—Welcome at the Camp of the Sioux—He announced to them the Word of God.

In June, 1847, a few persons from Port Pierre, and from Old Fort on the banks of the Missouri River, came to Mendota. They spoke to me of several Catholic families living there, having children unbaptized, and told me that they would be pleased to have the visit of a Catholic priest. I learned also of them that the Sioux were there in great numbers, and would receive me with respect if I would announce to them the good tidings of the Gospel.

I informed the Right Rev. Bishop Loras of Dubuque, of all I knew about the people of that remote country, and proposed to him to accompany those who had come to Mendota, when they would go back to the Missouri River, if he would think it proper. I requested him also to ask of the Archbishop of St. Louis the faculties necessary; because those people lived on both sides of the river, and the west side then belonged to St. Louis. The Right Rev. Bishop gave his approval, and permission to me for an absence of two or three months.

In the beginning of July, 1847, our travelers, a few others, and myself, left Mendota. July 6th, I baptized a child at Traverse des Sioux, and two at Lac qui Parle, July 15th. We had traveled about two hundred miles from Mendota without any mishap or any event worthy to be mentioned. I will, however, state that I felt a certain interest when passing through a place, where, on the twenty-sixth of December, 1841, I was in danger of losing my life, and very probably would have lost it, if, unexperienced traveler that I was, I had refused to follow the good advice given me by Mr. Provencal just at the moment of our departure from Traverse des Sioux. I will relate the fact, as it may be useful to some inexperienced travelers.

The day was fine, and through the kindness of Mr. Provencal, I was provided with two companions and a horse, and we expected to reach Little Rock on the same day; but we did not until nine o'clock the night following. The good old gentleman, perceiving that I was

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starting with shoes unfit for a winter journey, said to me: "With such shoes, Father, I fear you shall have your feet frozen; you ought to use moccasins; let us go in, and I will give you a pair." "I thank you very much, Mr. Provencal, it is not necessary; the day is fine, I am a young man, and I do not fear." "Ah, my friend," said he to me, "you have no experience; the weather is fine, it is true, but the wind may change before you have traveled ten miles, and you may be very much embarrassed; believe me, Father, come in and change your shoes." I acceded to his advice. We had not yet advanced ten miles, when the weather changed; the wind became strong and cold, the snow was deep, the horse could scarcely carry my little baggage, and we were on a vast prairie without timber. I had once lost sight of my companions, the wind prevented them from hearing my voice when I called for them to assist me; and I was so much fatigued, that I thought once, I could not walk any longer. With my heavy shoes I could not have proceeded so far; I should have perished under the snow. I was, however, fortunate enough to find again my two companions; but we had to travel until dark before we could procure some wood to make a fire, and a convenient place to pass the night.

Mr. Provencal did Leblanc died in February, 1851, at the age of seventy-eight years, at Mendota, where I had often the gratification of visiting him during his last illness, and of administering to him last sacraments. *Requiescat in pace!*

Again to our journey of 1847. From Lac qui Parle to Fort Pierre we went west, except on the last days, when we had to travel a little southwest. We had no difficulty in crossing swampy places; the country was, for the most part, rolling prairies without timber, deficient in water and in buffaloes, though some of our companions, when going to Mendota in the spring, were sometimes embarrassed by the innumerable herds of these animals grazing or running on the same prairies.

Having traveled forty-five or fifty miles from Lac qui Parle, we encountered a camp of Sioux with whom we had a short conversation, and then we proceeded farther. One or two days after, an occurrence of some interest to travelers took place. On the western prairies,

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do not lose your compass. We had for guide, a man who, like most guides, knew his duty, and who did not like much to have suggestions made—he went ahead, and we had to follow him without making any remark. On that day the sun did not appear for several hours, including the time we had stopped to take our dinner. When we were ready to start again, our guide jumped on his horse and went on alone a quarter of a mile before we began to move. I thought he had taken a wrong direction, took my compass, and saw that he was returning to Lac qui Parle. I showed the compass to the others, and they were convinced of it. This time, Boyer has made a mistake, said they; and then at the top of their voices, “Boyer, Boyer come back, come back!” repeating the same until he had heard them. He came back speedily, and appeared to be displeased, thinking we would not obey and follow the guide; but having learned by the compass that he was going east, he was very much confused, and went west fast and without any reply.

An alarm. On a beautiful day, near one of the tributaries of the James River, when proceeding farther west without any trouble or anxiety, at once a change of fortune arose. Before long, we saw we might have to fight to save our lives. Some Rees, or perhaps some other savages as dangerous as 22 the Rees, had been seen by us, at a distance of a mile. Several times we saw one or two of them getting up and then stooping and hiding themselves in the grass. They were, no doubt, spies; and not surprising if they would number thirty or forty men, to attack us. We stopped immediately and loaded all the guns. We were nine men, three women, and two or three small children. In such circumstances, as it was the duty of a Catholic missionary, I advised them to trust in God, not to begin the fight, except that, against our request, the Indians would come so near to us that we could no longer protect and defend ourselves. I recommended to them to invoke the assistance of God, and not to forget to say an act of contrition before the fight, if we were forced to it. I did not think proper, at that time, to add anything else; but if fighting had been inevitable, I would have made them say a short act of contrition, and then given them the absolution. We remained at the same place for an hour, and seeing no more of them appear, we advanced a little farther, made a fire near a deep ravine, in order to prepare our supper.

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Meanwhile we saw a man coming up to us from the bottom of the ravine; he was a Sioux, a friend; he had been with his whole family very much frightened, from the very moment they perceived us on the prairie; they had taken us for enemies and he had come into that ravine to hide himself, and to run to a camp of Sioux at a distance of six miles where he was to inform them of the situation of his family and return to their assistance with a strong force. We invited him to supper, and we passed a happy night.

Two or three days after, took place another occurrence which would have been the cause of the destruction of our little caravan had we not been prudent and willing to bear patiently an offense of a very singular character. In the morning of the day we saw before us a camp of Sioux, and we were glad of it, for our provisions were scanty for the remainder of our journey, and there was not much prospect of killing any buffalo. Having arrived at half a mile from the camp we saw a messenger on horse-back coming at full speed towards us. We proceeded a little farther and then we stopped; and in order to hear him more easily, four of us, who were on horse-back, placed ourselves on one line, the others stood near us. As soon as the messenger had arrived, without saying one word, he fired his gun loaded with powder upon the head of our guide's horse; then loaded again his gun with powder and unloaded it upon the head of the second horse; he loaded his gun a third time and fired it upon the third horse in the same manner. When I saw I was about to be the recipient of a similar insult I said to him: "Friend, come and shake hands with the black gown, cease firing, my horse is young, he would be frightened and perhaps throw me down." He immediately extended his hand to me and all was over.

We asked him then what had induced him to act as he had done. He replied that though he was but dust and ashes, he was pleased to show us that he was a man, and added that we could now proceed to his camp without fear and that we would be welcome. Then he returned to the camp at full speed.

I understood afterwards, that it was an act of revenge for an offense he had received when visiting Fort Pierre, two or three years before.

We all felt deeply the insult, but no one felt it so much as L. M., who expressed himself as follows: "Are we such cowards as to allow savages to insult us? I have two balls in my gun, and if he had insulted me as some of us have been, I would have killed him. We must not allow savages to insult us; if any one of them comes to insult me, I shall kill him." "Mr. M.," said I to him, "you are very much irritated. Do not speak about killing any one, if it can be avoided by bearing an offence for the love of God. Let me tell you also, that it would be very imprudent to kill an Indian in such circumstances; it would cause the destruction of us all." L. M. and all the others understood that human prudence alone was making it a duty to bear with patience an insult, rather than have a conflict with the Indians who could have destroyed our little caravan in a short time. We then proceeded to the camp where we were treated with kindness. Before parting I announced to them some of the principal doctrines of our holy faith. *Deo gratias.*

24

No. VI. Continuation of Events during the same Journey—Scarcity of Water—Almost dying with Thirst—Our Joy when we Learned that Water had been Found—At Fort Pierre all were very kind to us—The Agent, Interpreter, and Employes—The Sioux were very numerous around the Fort—Listened with great Respect to the Truths of Christianity—Some danger to our Lives, etc.—This Memoir was written in 1876.

Our last misfortune, before arriving at Fort Pierre, was scarcity of water; we had none for a day and a night. That time appeared to us very long. Travelers on the prairies, who, for want of food or water, had to suffer almost to death, say that they would prefer to be without food three or four days than one hot day without water.

On that day we had eaten buffalo dry meat, which might be compared to salted meat, as to its effect in making one feel thirsty. At two o'clock in the afternoon, two of our caravan went before us on horse-back in order to find, if possible, some water, for we were all very thirsty. We traveled until dark, expecting all the time to see our two companions bringing us some water, but they did not come back. At eleven o'clock, J. B. M., fearing he

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might die during the course of the night, requested me to hear his confession in order to prepare for death. After midnight, however, the weather changed, and at the rising of the sun there was some dew on the grass. Mrs. L. Malo, in order to have a little water for her son, a child about one year old, gathered with her handkerchief drops of dew, pressed the handkerchief over a vessel, and was successful in her purpose.

Last summer, at Fort Wadsworth, D. T., I had a conversation 25 compensation with a government scout, who, over twenty-eight years ago, was the little child above mentioned.

Afar off, at nine o'clock in the morning, we perceived our two companions on horseback raising up a water keg to make us understand that they were coming to our relief. We proceeded speedily and, having met them, they presented it to us that we might quench our parching thirst. But our poor horses, almost exhausted by the want of water, had to go three or four miles farther before they could get something to drink at a place where we were delighted at the sight of a beautiful lake.

Toward the end of July we arrived at Fort Pierre, which was then the principal trading post of the American Fur Company in the Northwest. It is situated on the west side of the Missouri River, between the forty-fourth and forty-fifth degrees of latitude. The agent of the company, John B. Cardinal the interpreters and the other employes, were all very kind to me. In the fort they spoke the English, the French, and the Sioux languages. Predicate evangelium omni creature. "Preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark xvi, 15). So I did with pleasure, all the time I was there, at least as much, or as often as possible. I married but one couple, baptized thirteen children who had Catholic parents, and fifty-five belonging to the Sioux nation at the request of their parents. Two or three years before, Father de Smet had also baptized a certain number of their children. I did the same, hoping that in a few years, if not before, they would have among them a Catholic missionary.

A large number of the Unk-papas, the Brules, the Black-feet Sioux, and of other bands of the Sioux nation, were encamped at different places only a few miles from the fort. To my great satisfaction I conversed many times, by an interpreter, with some of the chiefs and head men, and twice they came in great number to the fort to hear the good tidings of the Christian religion, after having received an invitation from me for that purpose. Over twenty-eight years have passed since that time, and yet I have present to my mind the place where they met, their large number, their attitude, their attention and great respect to the word of God.

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The subjects we touched were the following ones: God; The Eternal God; Creator and Preserver of all; The Angels; Man and his Destiny; The Fallen Angels and their Malice towards the Human Race; The Fall of our First Parents; The Son of God made Man for our Redemption; His Doctrines; His Miracles; His Death; His Resurrection; His Ascension into Heaven; The end of the World; the General Resurrection; The Last Judgment; Hell; Heaven; Eternity.

I had a good interpreter, the best I have ever known, to explain in Sioux the truths of Christianity. Never before or after was I so much satisfied when announcing the word of God to the Indians; excepting, however, the few days I spent in instructing the Indians who were hung at Mankato on the twenty-sixth of December, 1862. Thirty-three died Catholics after having given such signs of faith, hope, and charity, contrition, and resignation to their unfortunate fate that I cannot entertain any doubt of their salvation.

As soon as we had ceased speaking to the Indians, one of the chiefs rose, expressed his thanks to me for the good things they had heard, and recommended to all the Indians there present not to forget them and to communicate them to their respective families.

I visited another place down the Grand Bend of the Missouri. I baptized there eighteen children, and an old Indian, very sick, eighty years of age. I was invited to go to the tepee

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of a chief Sioux by the name of Mato Topa, "The Four Bears," where I met him with the head men of his band, the government agent, and an interpreter. We took there our dinner, which being over, I announced to the Indians, but chiefly by the interpreter, the consoling truths of our holy faith. As soon as we had ceased speaking to them, several remarks were made by Mato Topa. The first one which was addressed to the interpreter was follows: "Ask the agent why, for so many years, our Great Father (the President of the United States) has sent us so many men, and never any one to make known to us the good things, which have been taught to us by the black gown." The interpreter fulfilled his duty; and the agent afterwards told me that if I was willing to remain with the Sioux under 27 his charge, he would inform the department and obtain some funds to help me. My answer was, that having permission from my Bishop for two or three months only, I could not accept his kind offer, but I would do all in my power to procure them a Catholic missionary.

A steamboat, loaded with merchandise by the A. F. Company, arrived from St. Louis whilst I was there and stopped at that place. That boat was to go as far as the mouth of Yellowstone River. I was pleased to have so good a chance of visiting the Mandans who had, several times, expressed the desire of being instructed by the Catholic priest. They lived on the east bank of the Missouri, about half way between Fort Pierre and the Yellowstone River, so that I could spend a few days with them, and be ready to go down the river on the same steamer. I went back to Fort Pierre, where I disposed of my horse, to which I was very much attached for more than one reason, but the principal one was that he had spared my life on a certain occasion, which I will relate, as it may be useful to some persons.

In the spring of 1846, I had lost my horse, and for over one month, not one word about any one having seen him, when I was told that some Sioux had endeavored, for several days to catch a horse grazing near the banks of the Vermilion River, about eighteen miles from Mendota. By the description of the horse I was assured that it was the horse I had lost. But how to catch him? Mr. Augustin Cournoyer and myself went to Vermilion River on horse-

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back, and we brought with us a long rope, some corn and a tin pan. Arrived there we saw the horse. We stopped and let our horses eat some grass. My horse came nearer. I called him by his name, but to no effect. We put some corn in the pan, shook it to make some noise with it, in order to induce him to come and eat it, but yet to no purpose. Then we tried to catch him with our long rope. We unrolled and extended our rope, and at its end we made a slip-knot. We then threw around it some corn and came back to our horses. This time he came to eat the corn, put one of his fore feet in the noose; I drew the rope and he was entrapped. He had to stand upon three feet, and could not move. We then went 28 to him; I caressed him with my hand, he shuddered a little, and then he appeared totally reconciled to me. We saddled the horse and I got on horse-back; my companion did the same and went before. When going down a hill near the river my horse went on so slowly, that to make him go a little faster I struck his back with my right hand; the horse was surprised, and made such a motion that I was thrown over his head, striking my right shoulder against the ground, and having my two feet entangled in the stirrups. The thought passed through my mind like lightning that I was to be crushed to death in a moment under the feet of my horse, and judged at the tribunal of God, which caused me to cry out, "O, my God, I am dead! have mercy on me!" these four last words were in my mind, but I did not utter them. My horse did not move, or rather he went back one step or two, and against all expectation my feet got out of the stirrups. I rose up, and my companion came to me, took care of the horse, and I walked towards the river to drink some water. While going I became blind, and tottering in the path to the river, I reached it, drank some water and recovered my sight.

About the middle of August I left Fort Pierre, and went aboard the steamer. We had a pleasant voyage during three or four days, and then a great mishap. Our boat struck a snag, the steam-pipe was broken by the concussion, and they cried "Fire!" All the passengers ran to the rear of the boat. I was taken writing in a small room, opened the door, saw the smoke, ran also to the rear of the boat, found it crowded with men, advised some of them to jump down to the second floor, or to allow me to pass in order to get

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down. They let me pass, and I jumped down to the second floor, saw a thick smoke, took off my coat to be ready to leap into the river, and to swim to shore, as soon as I would see the flames. There was a great quantity of powder in the boat, and an explosion to be feared. Happily, the fire was extinguished, and we heard the cry: "The fire is out, no more danger." Mr. Jos. Drouin, of St. Paul, was one of the passengers. Two or three persons were scalded; one only lost his life. He suffered the most 29 excruciating pains during six or seven hours, before he expired. He was a gentleman about forty years of age, well built, and no less than six feet high. He was one of the owners of the boat. "Remember, O man, that dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return."

The boat was repaired. The captain, however, refused to proceed farther, and gave orders to return to St. Louis. We stopped at Ft. Pierre, where three or four Sioux came aboard. They were to be landed at Old Fort, a few miles down the river. When we had started, a gentleman from St. Louis told me that he had been informed that the captain would not stop at that place, that we would see there on the bank of the river a large number of Sioux to compel him to land, and to give them presents as a compensation for the privilege granted to him to pass through their country, and if the captain would refuse to comply with their order they would fire upon the boat, and endeavor to stop it. He advised me to remain on the west side of the boat, in order not to be exposed to the balls. When near Old Fort, we saw standing on the east side of the river the Sioux in great numbers.

The captain rang the bell, and all preparations were made, as if they were to land. They sounded, and the water was found too shallow; they went on a little farther, and sounded again; but again the water was too shallow. They continued the same stratagem, until they were far enough to fear nothing from the Indians. Then they landed the Sioux who were on board, and proceeded farther.

At Vermilion I baptized a Sioux woman who was very sick, and two children at Council Bluffs. Arriving at St. Louis Sunday, I immediately went to the cathedral; when I reached it High Mass was begun. I was for one day the guest of the kind Archbishop of St. Louis,

before going aboard a steamer bound for the upper Mississippi, and a few days after I reached Mendota. Deo gratias.

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No. VII. Memoir of a few Anecdotes showing the Deceit and Power of the Old Serpent—An Indian, according to his Statement, almost Killed by the Devil—Wonderful Dreams—A Father kills the Daughter in order to Appease the Monitou—Most Wonderful Cure of a Horse by a New Magician—A Man asks another to renounce Jesus Christ—Spirit Rappers—Is it allowed to Consult them?—Some Reflections on Superstitious Practices.

During the winter of 1843 and 1844 I was often visited by an old Indian much renowned among the men belonging to the Great Medicine. Once when I was alone with him, about eight or nine o'clock at night, he addressed me as follows: "Black Gown, if you will promise to give me three blankets I will allow you to tie me with ropes as you may think proper. In your presence I will invoke my spirits, they will lose your ropes, and you will see me here as free as I am now." My reply was, that I would make him no promise, but that I could procure enough rope to tie him in such a manner that all his spirits would be unable to set him free. He then said to me: "Black Gown, he assured that my spirits are very powerful and are to be revered by all." "In order to show you," I replied to him, "that I fear not your spirits, please invoke them, tell them to come here, and to give me some proof of their strength. But as I see that you are not willing to comply with my request, I will do it myself." Then raising my voice, I addressed them as follows: "Spirits of Totouwakanhdapi come here, come here, we shall fight together." "Stop! stop!" he exclaimed, "I fear my spirits will strike you." The old man appeared to be much frightened, and to induce me to believe him, he related to me 31 the following anecdote: "Once when invoking my spirits with solemnity, in a tepee prepared for that purpose, they raised me up, and then irritated against me they let me fall down, and I was almost killed." Placing then his right hand on his face, and showing me a large scar he had on one of his cheeks, he told me that that would give an idea of the wound, and that it was wrong to show any disrespect to the spirits, because

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they might become very much irritated and cause as great evils. Whether that statement was true or not, I am convinced that some of the Indians have communication with the evil spirits, and through them may perform wonderful works.

Over twenty-five years ago I had a sick call to a certain place, where I administered the last sacraments to a person who had been sick for a long time, and died some days after. In a conversation with her husband before I left his house, he requested me to listen to a curious story he would relate to me, and to be so kind as to tell him my opinion about it. This was his statement: "In a dream I had a few days ago, I saw a deer on the road, in a certain place, and being there with my gun, I killed the deer. In the morning, very much surprised with my dream, I, through mere curiosity, went thither with my gun, saw the deer just on the same spot, killed him and brought him to my house. The following night I had another dream, and saw in another place two deer. I killed one, and the other fled away. Encouraged by the good luck I had the day before, I took my gun, went thither, saw the two deer and again my dream was accomplished; I killed one, the other fled away. The third night in a dream, I saw again a deer, but he fled away; I went there, saw a deer which fled, and again was my dream fulfilled. The fourth night I dreamed I was in the woods, where I saw a tepee, on the top of which was the head of a deer. I started in the morning; when in the woods, though yet far from the spot, I saw the tepee and everything according to my dream. I proceeded nearer, and having arrived there, I found nothing but a rock. Frightened, I ran away as fast as possible, and having reached home, I fell sick and lost a great quantity of blood; I thought I would die." Then he asked me to tell him what was my opinion about such dreams. "Before answering your question," said I to him, "I desire to know if you have not already related your story to some of the Indians, and if so, I wish you to tell me their opinion." "I have," he replied to me, "and they told me that if I had brought the head of a deer to that rock, as an offering to the spirits, I would have been favored with similar dreams." "It is plain enough, then," said I to him, "that some evil spirit wishes you to honor him by an offering, a sacrifice, an act of idolatry. You know as well as myself, that it is by similar offerings that the Indians worship their spirits." He became convinced that

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the devil was the author of his dreams, and assured me that he would be more careful henceforward.

I spoke further to him of the power and deceits of the evil spirits, of certain favors they may grant to those who invoke them, or communicate with them. "But you must bear in mind," I added, "that it is a crime before God, and that those who communicate with evil spirits are punished even in this life, as it might be proved by many passages of the holy scriptures. A few days ago you were favored with some dreams which gave you the chance of killing two deer, but you never can forget that you were very much frightened; that you lost a great quantity of blood; and that you were in great danger of losing your life."

Just now when opening the *Ave Maria*, of January 15th, 1876, I noticed in a letter written by an Oblate Father, who last summer was at Esquimaux Bay, that an Indian, converted three years before by Pere Arnould, was before his conversion more addicted to superstition than any one I have heard of amongst our Sioux and Chippeways. This is the relation of the good Father:

"Watshikat, when a infidel, was very superstitious; he dreaded the evil spirits. His son falls sick; Watshikat is desperate. The *jongleurs* are called, and the drums resounded close to the patient's hut; vain efforts; the disease makes rapid progress. The unfortunate father centers the hut, and his quick ear detects in the hard breathing of his son the death-rattle. He rushes out—he must have a dream. 33 He lays himself down at the foot of a tree; after a few minutes he rises up again, and exclaims: 'My son will not die; but there must be another victim to appease the Manitou. Daughter, thou must be offered for thy brother's sake.' Prayers, supplications, tears, resistance, all are useless; and the poor maiden, scarcely sixteen years of age, is tied to a tree—a detonation is heard, followed by a piercing cry; 'Manitou! Manitou.' Three balls had shot through her heart. They run from the victim to her brother—a moment later the Indian's son was drawing his last breath.

Now Watshikat weeps for his sin."

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Almost thirty years ago I was visited by a person who came to ask me a favor, telling me that he would be very much obliged to me, if I would render him this service: "My mare," said he to me, "is lying down very sick, almost dying; please allow N. N. to heal her." My reply was that I had no objection that N. N., or anybody else should heal his mare, if he could do it. "Father, N. N. has sent me to you for that purpose, because you forbade him to use his secret." "Oh, I understand you now; you would have me to permit him to make use of some superstitious words and performance—I cannot." "But, Father, please give him your permission, my mare has cost me a high price, and if he does not heal her, she will die." "If the mare were mine," I replied to him, "and had cost me ten thousand dollars, I would prefer to let her die than to have her healed by superstitious practices because they are forbidden by the law of God."

He left my room and went to N. N., where four or five men were expecting him in order to hear about the decision of Father Ravoux; and arriving there he informed them that no permission could be granted.

One of these men discovered a new expedient, and said to N. N.: "Father Ravoux forbade you to use your secret to heal horses, but he did not forbid you to make known the secret to others; tell me what is to be done, and I will go to the stable, and try to heal the mare." N. N. complied with his request, and then the new magician went to the stable, pronounced the words, performed the ceremony, and the 34 mare rose up immediately, left the stable, ran away to graze, and was cured.

We read in the holy scriptures that those who use such practices, including no doubt those who teach them to others, shall be punished even in this life, and I can testify that I have known some of them, who have been severely chastised during the course of this life, and whose death was most unfortunate. I will speak only of one of them, who after having communicated the secret above mentioned to N. N., proposed to initiate him in some more important knowledge, provided he would renounce Jesus Christ. N. N. refused with indignation such a proposal. The man who made that devilish proposition to N. N. is no

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more; his family have vanished away; they are all dead. I never could induce him to give up his superstitious practices. For the many years I knew him, he was always surrounded and oppressed with evils. One day, when complaining to me about his great misfortune, I asked him if he had ceased practicing his superstitious performances. His answer was that since the time he had heard in the church my instruction on that subject, he had almost given them up, and he had lately refused from an American five dollars as a present to induce him to heal his horse. "However," said I to him, "you continue yet your superstitious practices." "Well," he replied, "I am poor, and these few last weeks I had to bear many losses, and when I saw some days ago my mare lying very sick, I was compelled to heal her."

"According to the instructions you listened to, some months ago," said I to him, "your misfortune would be the temporal punishment God has declared he would send upon those who make use of such superstitious practices; but such a chastisement is nothing, when compared to the eternal sufferings prepared for you, except you will repent, amend you life, and fulfill all the duties of a good Christian."

An old and conscientious man, fearing to offend God, came to me for advice, and stated his case as follows: "I spent last evening at P. P., where they consulted certain spirits on many subjects by the means of a table. Though a stranger to them, I was invited to the same amusement; 35 and as they had done, so I did; I asked several questions on subjects entirely unknown to those there present, and, to any great surprise, they were answered correctly. I might be invited again to-night, and I fear to commit a sin by asking the spirit new questions. Be then so kind, father, as to give me your advice." He informed me also of the difficult questions he had asked, and of the answers given to him. I immediately saw that it could not have been done by human, natural knowledge, and as heaven has nothing to do with such devices to produce miracles, it was evident that it was the work of hell, and consequently forbidden; and so I expressed my mind to him.

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The good old man left me, strongly resolved never more to consult or ask question of the spirits.

I had already given an instruction from the pulpit on that subject, and forbidden such practices, but unfortunately, too often, the evil one blinds some of our hearers, and takes the word of truth from their hearts, in order to bring them into the path of perdition. Too many forget that evil spirits have not lost their natural faculties; that they are yet powers; principalities, rulers of this world of darkness; that they are deceitful and lying spirits; that they deceived and caused the ruin of our first parents, and by them that of the human race; that they wrought many wonders to prevent the execution by Moses of the designs of God; that they used the Sabeans and Chaldeans, lightning and violent storms to destroy holy Job's goods, servants and family, and afterwards covered his whole body with sores; that the resplendent virtues and miracles of Jesus Christ did not prevent the devil from tempting Him; that he brought Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and then on a high mountain, where by artifices he showed Him all the glory of the world, in order to induce Him to fall at his feet and adore him.

Christians, reflecting on these facts related in the holy scriptures, should not be much surprised at the reading of the anecdotes I have narrated.

Nothing new under the sun. This working of the devil was also the same in the time of Tertullian, who, in his 36 apology in favor of the Christian religion, which he addressed to the first magistrates of the Roman Empire, says to them: "Now, if magicians make phantoms appear, if they awoke the souls of the dead, if they cause children to utter oracles, if they imitate miracles, if skillful charlatans, they know even how to send dreams by the help of devils whom they have invoked and by whom goats and tables foretell things to come, how much rather will these seducing powers do for themselves, and by themselves, what they perform for strangers."* *Deo Gratias*.

* This passage has been translated from the French. Œuvres de Tertullien, Tome II., page 297, Paris, 1852. 37

No. VIII. The Religious Belief of the Sioux—They Worship and Invoke Wakantanka, the Great Spirit—They are Polytheism—They Address their Prayers to a great number of Spirits—Deities—They fear them—They ask of them every kind of Favors, as also to be Delivered from Sickness and all Evils, etc..

The Sioux invoke Wakantanka, "The Great Spirit," but as the pagans of old and recent times, they are polytheists, and worship a great number of spirits or deities. They respect and venerate them; they offer them sacrifices and prayers in order to obtain by their assistance good success in war, in the chase, in all temporal concerns, and especially to be relieved from sickness, and from all evils.

On the roads and on the prairies, some years ago, the travelers could see large and small granite boulders tinged with vermilion. These were Indian altars, where the Sioux offered vows, prayers and sacrifices to their deities. I remember having seen Indians passing by, stop and venerate there, with respect and awe, some spirit or god, which, I think, they believed to be present in the boulder or near it. "Tunkanshidan, unshimadawo!" "My grandfather, have mercy on me!" These words I have heard pronounced with great favor and awe by one Indian when standing by a large boulder tinged with vermilion; he had, at the same time, his hand stretched upon it.

This kind of worship reminds me of Jacob when God manifested himself to him by a mysterious ladder the foot of which stood upon the ground, the top seeming to reach to heaven, and angels ascending and descending by it. Jacob then took the stone which was under his head at the time of the miraculous vision, set it up for a title, poured oil upon it, and said: "This stone which I have set up for a title, shall be called the house of God" (Gen. xxviii).

The devout prayer of that Indian near the tinged boulder, brings also to my recollection the manifestation of God to Moses at Horeb. "The Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush." And God said to him: "Put off the shoes from thy feet: for the

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place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” And then God gave His orders to Moses; and Moses was allowed to converse with God (Exodus iii).

No surprise to me, if pagan deities, *the Apes of God*, according to Tertullian, had often manifested themselves under visible forms to their worshippers, and prescribed to them the place and the manner they ought to be honored and venerated, in order to obtain their favors, and appease their wrath!

The Indians fear very much the power of the spirits; also that of some of the men belonging to the Great Medicine whom they believe capable of doing much good to their friends and much evil to their enemies.

Some very good Sioux, not belonging to the Great Medicine, rebuked me more than once, when I spoke rather with contempt of the communication of some Indians with the spirits, and of their power to do good or evil to any one.

“Do not despise the power of those men,” would these good Indians tell me, “because we are afraid you will have to repent before long; we have known many who, by incurring their displeasure, were afflicted with long sickness, and even of some who did not recover, and died.” My reply was that I did not believe they could do any harm to any by the assistance of their spirits; and even supposing that by the help of evil spirits they would bring evil to the idolaters, they would be unable to hurt those who, believing in God, and in Jesus Christ, the redeemer of the world, would be baptized, and observe His divine precepts; for God, the maker of the world, the creator and master of all things, had declared He would protect them, and crown them with an eternal glory after this present and short life.

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My words on that subject, on different occasions, had a good effect among the Indians, who had been frightened by some of the men of the Great Medicine, and forbidden by them to become Christians, or to allow their children to be instructed by the black gown.

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They began to believe and to understand better the power and bounty of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, made man to save us from the slavery of Satan, to wash us in His blood from the corruption and curse of sin, to render us the children of God, the partakers of His glory and of His eternal happiness.

The memory and intellect of the Indians are not inferior to ours; they need only cultivation. Once I met a Sioux, whom I thought I had never seen before. I spoke to him of God, the creator and preserver of all beings, and also of our kind Redeemer, of His miracles, of His death and resurrection, etc., and then asked him if he had understood me well. "Yes," replied he to me; "and the instruction you have given me, is just the same I heard from you four years ago."

Poor Indians, how unfortunate they are! So long buried in the darkness of idolatry, they invoke yet, and offer sacrifices to evil spirits, as the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans! May God have mercy on them!

If we are not plunged in the same abyss of darkness—thanks, eternal thanks to Jesus, the light and the life of the world.

Before His coming upon earth, almost all nations walked in the path of darkness and death. "Nations the most enlightened, the most wise, (says * Bossuet), Chaldeans, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Greeks and Romans were the most blind on religion, so true it is that men are to be educated in it by a particular grace, by a wisdom more than human wisdom. Who would dare to relate the ceremonies of the immortal gods, and their impure mysteries? Their loves, their cruelties, their jealousies, and all other excesses were the subject of their feasts and sacrifices, of the hymns they * Discours Surl'Histoire Universelle. 2 me. Partie chap. 16. Œuvres choisies de Bossuet. Vol. 21. 40 sang, and of the paintings which they consecrated in their temples. Thus crime was adored and acknowledged necessary to the worship of the gods. The most grave of philosophers forbids drinking with excess, except in the festivals of Bacchus, and in honor of that god

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(Plat. de Legibus, lib. vi). Another one, after having severely blamed all indecent pictures, except those of the gods that desire to be honored by such infamies (Arist., Polit. lib. viii cap. 17). We cannot read without surprise the honors due to Venus, and the prostitutions established to adore her (Baruch, vi 10, 42, 43,—Herod, lib. i. c. 199—Strab, lib, viii). Greece, so polished, so wise, had received these abominable mysteries. In urgent affairs, individuals and republics vowed courtesans to Venus (Athen, lib. xii); and Greece did not blush to attribute her salvation to prayers addressed to that goddess. After the defeat of Xerxes and his formidable armies, they placed in the temple a tableau representing their vows and their processions, with this inscription of the famous poet Simonides: “These (courtesans) have prayed to Venus, who, through love for them, has saved Greece.”

Egyptians, Phœnicians, Greeks, Romans, etc., worshipped a multitude of deities under monstrous forms, viz., sphinxes with wings or without wings, having the body of a lion and the figure of a woman; centaurs, monsters half horse and half man; dragons, half man and half fish; anubis, wearing the human form and the head of a dog, fox or jackal; troth, with the body of a man, and the head of a lamb or of a bird by the name of ibis; Osiris, under the forms of the sacred bulls Apis and Mnevis, etc..

“All the gods of Gentiles are devils” (Ps. xcv, 5). And though devils may be allowed to transform themselves into angles of light, they generally appear under forms more proper to their own condition, under that of monsters, as it is testified by the holy scriptures where the names of serpent, asp, basilisk, lion and dragon are applied to them by many servants of God, who had to contend with violent attacks of evil spirits, wearing monstrous forms of beasts and men, as we read it in the lives of St. Anthony, of many anchorites 41 among the fathers of the desert, of St. Francis, St. Theresa, of the venerable Agnes of Jesus, etc.; by pagan nations, even the most learned and polished, who, according to the statement of their writers, worshipped the gods under so many ugly and unnatural figures as already specified. Jupiter himself is said to have been metamorphosed into a man with the head of a bull.

That so many nations prostrated themselves before such idols, such gods, would be almost incredible, if it was not so well attested by all antiquity. They had proceeded so far in the path of darkness, in the shadow of death, that they immolated human victims to the gods as “Watshikat sacrificed his daughter to the Manitou a few years ago at Esquimaux Bay.”

Even a portion of the people of Israel followed the abominable and barbarous example of the Gentiles. Hear David the prophet: “And they were mingled among the heathens, and learned their works: and served their idols, and it became a stumbling block to them. And they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils. And they shed innocent blood; the blood of their sons and daughters, which they sacrificed to the idols of Chanaan”—(Ps. cv).

O blindness and ingratitude of the human heart! The children of Israel saved from the cruel hand of their oppressor by so many wonders, wrought by a bountiful God who opened the sea for their salvation, and buried in it Pharaoh's army, turned their back on their benefactor, and immolated their sons and daughters to devils!

O dreadful power of Satan!

Whoever wishes to be saved ought to “watch and pray.”— *Deo gratias*.

42

No. IX. Their Belief in a Future Life—Their Love and Affection for their Departed Friends—Some desire to Die immediately after their Death in order to Rejoin them before they be too far off—They think to give them Relief by Bringing to their Grave Food and the best things they Possess.

Over forty-five years ago, when traveling in Minnesota Valley, not far from the place where many years after was built Fort Ridgely, I saw clothed with rags an Indian chief by the name of Sleepy Eyes, whom I knew by reputation. He was very sad. I asked somebody

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the cause of his grief, and I was told that he had lost a most beloved son, and that his affliction made him often express his desire of leaving this life, in order to be again with his son. The unfortunate father believed that a short time after death his soul would meet that of his son, which he supposed not to be yet far, because he had died not long before.

Indian fathers are much afflicted when they are bereft of their children by death, but Indian mothers cannot refrain from making the air resound with cries and expressions which reveal the wounds of their hearts.

We read in the history of Minnesota by Rev. E. D. Neil, "the following paraphrase of the lament of an Indian mother," which gives a good idea of the touching affection of Indian mothers towards their children, as also of the belief of the Sioux concerning a future life, and other interesting subjects:

"Me choonkshee! me choonkshee! my daughter! my daughter! alas! alas! My hope, my comfort has departed, my heart is very sad. The Great Spirit has entered my lodge in anger, and taken thee from me, my first born and only 43 child. How can I survive thee? How can I be happy, and you a homeless wanderer to the spirit land? How can I eat if you are hungry? I will go to the grave with food for your spirit, me choonkshee! me choonkshee!"

Many times I have been witness of the deep sorrow, grief and affliction of the Indian mothers, expressed by tears, cries and words, which reached the bottom of my soul, and brought into my mind this thought: Death is the cause of bitter tears and desolation in the wilderness as well as in town and city!

Nature ought to have its course! Christ himself, hearing that his friend Lazarus had died, wept!

Happy, if instructed by the certainty of death, which every day destroys so many thousands' of human lives, we learn to be prudent and wise, and to do good works,

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in order to be saved and crowed with an eternal glory—and not to fall by our folly in committing sin under the curse of the *second death*, infinitely more dreadful than the first one, because it will be an eternal life of suffering, which may be called an eternal death!

I have translated from the twenty-second volume of the *Histoire des Voyages* (published at Amsterdam, A. D. 1777), an article on certain important customs and belief of the Indians of North America, which being compared with those of the Shanars and other people of Southern Asia, would induce many to believe that our Indians have come from Asia and belong to some Asiatic race.

It is proper to remark that the author of this article had read the works of Champlain, l'Escarbot, la Hontan and la Potherie, and also of Rev. Fathers Lafitau, Charlevoix, etc., and that he informs his readers that his relation is chiefly based on the writings of two missionaries, who had for thirty year studied the habits, customs, religion and morals of the Indians of North America.

“It is by tradition,” says our author, “that they suppose the soul immortal. They pretend that, being separated from the body, it preserves the same inclinations it had before, and thence the custom of interring with the dead, whatever they used to satisfy their needs or taste. They are even persuaded that the soul remains for a long time 44 near the body, after their separation; then it goes to some unknown country, where, according to some, it is transformed into a dove. Others believe that all men have two souls; one is as the one above mentioned; the other never quits the bodies, but only leaves one body to pass into another. This reason induces them to bury the children near the road, that women, when passing by, may gather these second souls, which not having enjoyed life long, have a greater desire to begin a new one. They ought also to be fed, and this is what induces them to bring food to their tombs. The difficulty they have sometimes to provide for the living, makes them forget the care of feeding the dead. The custom is also to inter with them whatever they possessed, and to add many gifts.

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They believe that the region of souls is very far towards the west, and that it takes them several months to reach it. They have great difficulties to surmount during their journey. They speak of a river to be crossed over, and on which many suffer shipwreck; of a dog against which they can scarcely defend themselves; of a place of suffering, where they have to expiate their faults; of another, where are tormented war prisoners who were killed or burnt, and whither they delay to go as long as possible. This is the reason why, after the death of these unfortunates, the Indians fearing that their souls remain around their huts, to revenge themselves for whatever they had to suffer, carefully visit all surrounding places, with the precaution of striking with a rod great strokes, and of screaming most powerfully, to force them to proceed farther. The Iroquois believe that Atahentsic (a deity) ordinarily sojourns in the region of souls, and that his only occupation is to deceive them in order to cause their perdition, but Jouskeka (another deity) endeavors to defend them.

Among a thousand fabulous recitals, which resemble much those of Homer and Virgil, they relate one similar to the adventure of Orpheus and Eurydice, in which there is almost nothing to be changed, except the names. Their clysium consists in finding always good fishing and hunting, a perpetual spring, a great abundance of food without any labor, and all sensual pleasures.”

45

I have received by mail an article on “Demonolatry, Devil-Dancing, and Demoniactal Possession,” written by Robert Charles Caldwell. A friend who sent it to me, wrote at the beginning of it what follows:

” Contemporary Review, March, 1876. Published in London.

“This article may interest you. It might be compared with your Indian experiences.”

R. C. Caldwell informs his readers that he has “seen almost as much of the *cultus* of evil spirits in the East, as any living man has;” and that he writes of what he has seen. His

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narration shows that in Southern Asia evil spirits are at least as much feared as they are by the Sioux and other Indians of Northern America; that sacrifices are offered to them by the people as it is done by our Indians, in order to appease their wrath and obtain favors; that they have many customs towards departed souls, similar to those of the Indians of this country; and that some paint their faces as it is practiced among our Indians. R. C. Caldwell, speaking of the priest prepared to offer sacrifices, says: "His forehead is smeared with ashes, and there are streaks of vermilion and saffron over his face" (P. 375). About departed souls he expresses himself as follows: "The natives of Southern India believe that when any one meets with an untimely end, his soul wanders about near the locality of his death, and will make deadly mischief unless it is appeased and propitiated. This propitiation, think the simple folk, can only be effected by offering to it those things in sacrifice in which its possessor, whilst he was alive, delighted. But if, notwithstanding all precautions, an outburst of cholera, or of small-pox, or other calamity overtakes the scene of the dead man's last moments, the misfortune is at once, as a matter of course, laid at the door of the wraith of the deceased. Something has angered it. It will not be laid. It must be a malignant devil, and nothing short of it. Beat the tom-tom louder! Let the fattest sheep be offered as a propitiation! Let the horns blow out as the priest reels about in his giddy dance, and gashes himself in his frenzy! More five! Quicker music! Wilder bounds from the devil-dancer! Shrieks, and laughter, and sobs, and frantic shouts.

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In this century when England sent troops against Travencoe, Captain Pole was mortally wounded in the Ghauts of India, but returning to Madura for medical assistance, he died in the South Tinnevely palmyra forest. "The simple Shanars," says R. C. Caldwell, "were terrified; they opened his scanty 'kit,' and amongst other things they found some brandy and cheroots. What was to be done? His *manes*, according to their belief, were now abroad in the neighborhood, and must be duly propitiated. A grave was dug, the services of local devil-dancer were procured, and the ghost of the officer was duly worshipped. But he was a white man; what gift would be most pleasing to his soul? The brandy and

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cheroots! So almost to this present day has continued this extraordinary worship. Alcoholic liquor, in some shape or other, and cherotts, have been periodically presented at the grave of Captain Pole in order that the spirit of the department soldier might refrain from wreaking vengeance on the simple rustics of the neighborhood” (P. 372).

These customs and religious belief of the Shanars and other people of Southern Asia, differ but little from those of the Indian of Northern America. Athens and Pagan Rome had many superstitions similar to them.

On the 22d of February we read in the Breviary a passage from St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in Africa, in which he speaks of *the pernicious error* of some pagans of his time, who brought food and wine to the tombs of the dead, as if their souls would come out of them, and require such offerings.

May God have mercy on the poor Indians, and on all the tribes and nations of the earth, who live in the shadow of death! May the light spoken of by Isaias shine upon them! These are the words of the prophet: “Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and a mist the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light—(Is. 1x.). Let us pray for the poor Indians! *Deo gratias.*

47

No. X. Horrible and almost Incredible are the Tortures they Inflict upon Themselves to please their Gods and obtain their Favors—General Curtis' interesting Letter, etc..

Horrible and almost incredible are the penances and tortures some Indians inflicted upon themselves to please their gods and obtain their favors. A few days ago I read in the “Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society” for the year 1867, a letter from Major General Curtis, dated Fort Sully, June 2, 1866, which brought to my mind many an old history about the penances and sacrifices of the Sioux to their duties, in order to

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render them propitious to their vows and prayers. But what I could relate would not be as interesting as that letter. Anyone reading it will see how powerful is Satan to induce men to suffer such martyrdom as that witnessed and described by Major General Curtis. Whoever desires to study the Indian's character and religious belief on that subject, will have a good document in that letter, which I ought to give in full, in order not to diminish its weight and value.

Major General Curtis' letter on the Dakota annual sun dance:

“The whole of the three thousand Sioux camped about us, gave me early information of their design to have the annual sun dance at this time and place, the season of the year—the trees in full leaf—having now arrived, and they wished me to inform Colonel Recor, the commander of the soldiers, that however boisterous their demonstrations might be, they would all be peaceable and of a pious character.

48

“On yesterday, June 1, the dancing was delayed at intervals to allow tortures to be inflicted. Two or three men stood over the devotee with needle and knife, very quietly performing penance, according to the customs of all these sacerdotal rites as follows: First, they cut the arms in several places by striking an awl in the skin, raising it and cutting out about half an inch; this is done on both arms, and sometimes on the breast and back. Then wooden setons (sticks about the thickness of a common lead pencil) are inserted through a hole in the skin and flesh. Then cords or ropes are attached to sticks by one end, and to the pole at the other end, the victim pulling on the ropes till the seton-sticks tear out the flesh and skin. I saw one with two setons thus attached to his breast, pulling till it seemed to draw the skin out three inches, and finally requiring nearly his whole might to tear out the seton.

“One, painted black, had four ropes attached at once. The pulling out is done in the dance, the pulling carried on in the time of the music by jerk, jerk, jerk, and the eye, head, and

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front all facing the sun in the form of supplication. One had four setons attached to four dry buffalo head bones. These were all strung and suspended to his flesh by ropes that raised each head some three feet off the ground. He danced hard to tear them out, but they would not break the skin. One came off the stick accidentally, but it was again fastened. Finally, these heavy weights (each at least twenty-five pounds weight), not tearing out by their own weight or motion, the devotee gave a comrade a horse to take hold of the rope and tear out the setons. While these were being thus tortured their female relations came in and had pieces cut of their arms to show their appreciation of the valor and devotion of their kinsmen. Still, as soon as the victim could be prepared, the music was renewed, and the dismal dance went on, victims' bodies now mingled with the blood, paint, and setons.

“There being several steamboats and many soldiers here, a crowd of spectators rather embarrassed the performers, so they concluded the performance at twelve o'clock, having only danced twenty-four instead of forty-eight, as they 49 usually do. All the devotees gave away all their ponies and other valuables to their friends, had their wounds carefully dressed by attendant medical men, and sat down to an abundant feast of dog soup and buffalo meat.

“So ended this most barbarous and painful exhibition of savage idolatry. The picture is still deeply impressed on my senses, but I cannot give half the horror of the scene, either by pen or pencil.”

In Southern Asia there are devil-dancers who practice religious performances no less horrible or diabolical. R. C. Caldwell, in his article on Demonolatry, inserted in the *Contemporary Review*, for March, 1876, as already mentioned, gives the following description of a devil-dancer's sacred rites, performances, prayers and sacrifices:

“His forehead is smeared with ashes, and there are streaks of vermillion and saffron over his face. He wears a high conical cap, white, with red tassel. A long white robe, or angi, shrouds him from neck to ankle. On it are worked, in red silk, representations of

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the goddess of smallpox, murder and cholera. *** The dancer, with uncertain, staggering motion, reels slowly into the centre of the crowd, and then seats himself. The assembled people show him the offerings they intend to present, but he appears wholly unconscious. He croons an Indian lay in a low, dreamy voice, with drooped eyelids and head sunken on his breast. He sways slowly to and fro, from side to side. Look! You can see his fingers twitch nervously. His head begins to wag in a strange, uncanny fashion. His sides heave and quiver, and huge drops of perspiration exude from his skin. The tom-toms are beaten faster, the pipes and reeds wail out more loudly. There is a sudden yell, a stinging, stunning cry, an ear-piercing shriek, a hideous abominable gobble gobble of hellish laughter, and the devil-dancer has sprung to his feet, with yes protruding, mouth foaming, chest heaving, muscles quivering, and outstretched arms swollen and straining as if they were crucified! Now, ever and anon, the quick, sharp words are jerked out of the saliva-choked mouth—‘I am God! I am the true God.’ Then all around him, since he and no idol is regarded as the 50 present deity, reeks the blood of sacrifice. The devotees crowd round to offer oblations and to solicit answers to their questions. “Shall I die of cholera during this visitation?” asks a grey-headed farmer of the neighborhood. “O God bless this child, and heal it,’ cries a poor mother from the adjoining hamlet, as she holds forth her diseased babe towards the gyrating priest. Shrieks, vows imprecations, prayers, and exclamations of thankful praise, arise, all blended together in one infernal hubbub. Above all arises the ghastly guttural laughter of the devil-dancer, and his stentorian howls—‘I am God! I am the only true God! He cuts and hack and hews himself, and not very unfrequently kills himself there and then (Page 375).

“I hold,” says R. C.. Caldwell (page 371), “that—as far as can be trusted and history relief upon—several *peyadis* , or devil-dancers, could be produced to-morrow in southern India who, as far as can be ascertained, are as truly possessed of evil agencies as was the man who was found by the fiends within him to howl that he was not himself, but that his name ‘was legion.’”

On the same page we read the following scene which took place at a devil's temple, a few miles distant from Tinnevally: "A caldron was over the fire and in it was lead in a molten state. 'Behold,'" calmly cried the priest, 'the demon is in me. I will prove to you all the presence within me of the omnipotent divinity.' With that he lifted the caldron, and poured the liquid lead over his head. Horns were blown, tom-toms beaten, fresh logs of resinous wood flung into the fire, and goats duly sacrificed. The priest staggered about a little, and then fell down in a fainting fit. Three days afterwards he died in horrible agony; but his mind was clear and calm to the last. The latest words he uttered were, *Nani sattya samy* ! 'It is indeed I who am the true God.'"

From the beginning of the world Satan was a liar and a murderer; he has continued at all times to be a liar and a murderer; and will not cease to be a liar and a murderer of men's souls and bodies to the end of the world!

51

We are horrified, when we reflect on the deplorable state of the unfortunate pagans, who, deceived by the powers of darkness, offer human blood—human sacrifice—even their own lives to devils! They are to be pitied! and for them we ought to pray the Father of light, that they may soon come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world; that they may no longer walk in the shadow of death, but in the light of the Sun of all justice and happiness! *Deo gratias*

52

No. XI. 1848-1849—Reason which induced Father Ravoux to write six Lectures on the most Important Subjects of Religion and the principal Duties of Man—It was to Answer different Attacks of Atheists, Infidels, Protestants, and bad Catholics—It was to Convince every one that we most Continually Work for our Eternal Salvation without which All shall be Lost forever—Subjects: (1) God, (2) Christianity, (2) The Catholic Church, (4) The Thought of Death, (5) Last Judgment and Eternity, (6) The

**Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus the Mother of God, because Jesus is God
—She is the Refuge of Sinners.**

Though ever pleased with the mission intrusted to my care by Divine Providence, the path I had to walk in was not always strewed with flowers. Among the Catholics I had some whose conduct was far from edifying to their neighbors. Bigoted ministers, Infidels and even Atheists were around, and vomited now and then their pestiferous poison. My little flock was very much scattered. Mendota, Fort Snelling, St. Paul, St. Anthony, and Wabasha, were the principal localities, where lived several Catholic families. Many others were stationed along the Minnesota River as far as Lake Traverse, others up and down the Mississippi Valley, and a few near the banks of Lake St. Croix, etc.. They spoke four different languages, French, English, Sioux, and Chippeway. What to do to instruct them all? How to guard them against the assaults of the old Serpent, and his satellites, who went around them, and who by words, or by giving them books containing devilish lies, endeavored to bring them in the path of perdition? The thought came into my mind to write and have printed a few instructions, which 53 would be useful to Catholics and to many others who had a very wrong idea about the doctrines of Christianity. Having reflected for some time before God on that subject, I put my hands to work, and during the winter of 1848 and 1849 I wrote six letters or instructions, which were printed in the spring of 1849, and which, many years ago, appeared with some alteration in *The Northwestern Chronicle*.

I will now relate some of the conversations or discussions I had in these early times with Atheists, Infidels and Protestants, to make my readers understand better what was then the state of affairs to a missionary whose flock was so much scattered.

Conversation or Rather Discussion with an Atheist— I thought he was a Catholic, thought not a practical one, because very seldom he attended Mass on Sundays. He was a good man, a friend of mine, and I considered it my duty to endeavor to bring him again to the

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path of salvation; but great was my surprise, when in a conversation with him, he denied the very existence of God.

This is about the conversation we had together on that occasion: "I am sorry, Mr. M., that very seldom you come to church on Sundays; you forget too much your Christian duty; you ought to be more careful for your eternal salvation, for we do not know how long we shall live; and as you know, after death the judgment; as a friend, and more so as a priest, it is my duty to request you to attend divine service on Sundays."

M. answered: "I am very glad to see the crowd on Sundays going in the small log church, and others standing piously around, during Mass; but as to me I perform my religious duty at home, and I think it is as good."

"Please tell me what is your religion?"

M., pointing out with his hand to a Bible, which was on a shelf, answered: "The Bible is my religion."

"Do you believe whatever is contained in the Bible?" M.: "J'en prends et J'en laisse—I take some and I leave some."

"Do you believe that there is a God who has created us and all we see in the universe?"

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"I do not believe in God, but I believe in nature."

"What do you mean by nature? What is nature?"

M.: "Nature is what is in ourselves, and in the whole universe."

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“Is it a real being, self-existing, forever self-existing, the creator and preserver of all things; by whom we see, we speak, we hear, we move, by whom the whole universe is governed with so much wisdom, and crowned, at certain times, with so much splendor?”

M.: “By nature I mean a power which I cannot well explain—a power which I feel, and which is felt by every man of a sound judgment—which power has ever and shall forever govern the whole universe.”

“Nature or the power you speak of, is then a real being, acting by itself, and ought to be the cause of our own existence, for we are forced by the light of our reason to acknowledge that a few years ago we were not in existence; that it is through the instrumentality of our parents we received our existence, but they were not our creators; that they too came in this world through their ancestors, and that so we must ascend up to a first cause, essentially existing by itself, and having always existed; which cause is the source of all things, the creator of all beings. Bayle, though an impious philosopher, expressed himself as follows on that subject: “In order to argue well of the production, it is necessary to consider God as the creator of matter, and the first and only principle of motion, if you cannot rise to the idea of a real creator, you will not avoid all the rocks, and you will be compelled, on whatever side you may turn, to utter absurdities of which our reason cannot approve.”* M. ceased to argue and declared that there was a Supreme Being, who had under his control the whole universe; and our discussion was over.

* Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*.

Scarcely two weeks after I met him again, and having asked him the state of his health, he answered me that it was good enough, but that he had troubles, great troubles; and then raising up his eyes to heaven he exclaimed: “It is the will of God!” What change in his mind and in his heart, 55 said I to myself! two short weeks ago that some man was an Atheist!

O, how many unbelievers cease to be unbelievers in time of troubles, of danger, and more, so when they see death standing by, ready to cut off the thread of life! *La Maitrie Boulain*

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villiers, du Marsais, le Marquis d' Argens, Boulanger, etc., are striking examples of this kind of conversion. This last has declared that *he had ever respected religion in his heart; that when writing against it, he had smothered the voice of his conscience, that he had been carried away by the impetuosity of his imagination, by the praise and applause of philosophers* . He asked, and received the last sacraments. Maupertuis died in the arms of two capuchins. Montague—voltaire—etc.—[See Catechisme, Philosophique de Feller, livre premier, paragraphe V.].

Not very long after, I visited a Catholic family, living a few miles from Mendota. The lady of the house told me that they had received a pamphlet in the French language, which contained much scornful matter against our holy religion, and that she would like me to read it. Her husband who was present said to her: “Don't give such a book to Father Ravoux—throw it into the stove.” “O, madam, please do not burn that book,” said I to her, “but let me have it. It will give me a good opportunity to caution the Catholics against the apostles of error and falsehood. The worst passages in the book will be read by me from the pulpit at Mendota and St. Paul.” I became the owner of the pamphlet, and kept my promise in both churches. The lies were so patent, so conspicuous, that the falsity of the accusations was as plain to every one as that two and two make four; and they understood well what spirit induces men to write such pamphlets, and others to put them in circulation.

The “Reflect well on it,” or the six lectures, etc., having been printed, I distributed it, presented a copy to the gentleman who had sent the pamphlet above mentioned, and from that time he was more cautious, and did not go much among the Catholics to spread his errors, and give copies of that pamphlet, in which, among other falsehoods, it was 56 stated that the Catholic religion is making a *God of the priest* , and that in place of virtue it accepts *fasts, penances and money*.

Now, in few words, I will endeavor to give an idea of each lecture or instruction.

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The first lecture was against the crime of Atheists, who, carried away by their evil passions, deny God himself, whose glory is proclaimed everywhere by the splendor of His works, and acknowledged by all nations, who invoke Him, as their Creator, their Benefactor, their Master.

O, how guilty are the Atheists! St. Paul declares that they are inexcusable: “Because that which is known of God is manifest in them. God had manifested unto them, for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: his eternal power also, and divinity; so that they are inexcusable.”—*Ep. to the Rom. i, 19, 20.*

The second lecture was written to prove that Christianity is the work of God; that no power, no persecution could destroy it, because its founder, Jesus Christ, had established it to last until the end of the world. His birth, His miracles, His sufferings and His triumph had been foretold by the prophets of the Jewish nation. Jesus proved his mission and divinity by the most wonderful miracles. His apostles and disciples sent by Him to preach the gospel were endowed with the power of working miracles and converted the world.

Vain, then, against Jesus and His religion are all the endeavors of the Infidels and Pagans! “If God is for us, who shall be against us!” Unbelievers stirred up by hell, may speak with pride against Christianity; they may form new plots against it; they may send bishops, priests, and thousands of faithful and pious Christians into dungeons or on the scaffold, but God will laugh at their insane designs! And if they die unrepenting, they shall fall down in the dungeon of eternal torments!

My design in writing the third lecture was to demonstrate that Jesus, the founder of Christianity, instituted a church to teach all nations until the end of the world, 57 “teaching them,” said He to His apostles, “to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.”

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The church established by Jesus is to be obeyed by all, under pain of eternal damnation, no one being excepted, if he is not excused by *invincible ignorance*. Sects and divisions are entirely forbidden in the fold of our Divine Saviour; for He said: "There shall be one fold and one shepherd.—John X, 16. And St. Paul in his epistles to the Ephesians, iv., commands all Christians to be "careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." And in his epistle to the Galatians he reckons *dissensions* and *sects* amongst the sins excluding from the kingdom of God.

Where find that *unity* so essential in the Church of Christ, so necessary for salvation according to the holy scriptures, and to tradition, and so indispensable according to reason? In the Catholic church alone. How beautiful is that church by the unity of her members in faith, in sacraments, sacrifice and government! How unreasonable and scandalous is the so-called reformation by the divisions and subdivisions of its members, from the beginning of its existence.

[See variations of Protestants by Bossuet and J. J. Rousseau's 2me lettre de la Montagne.]

The fourth lecture was on the thought of death, as being a most powerful means to put a check to all our evil inclinations, and to stir up our courage in the fulfillment of all our Christian obligations. "In all thy works remember thy last end and thou shalt never sin"—Ecclesiasticus vii, 40. And again: "By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death"—Rom. v, 2. Who is the Christian, who reflecting on the thousands of millions of our predecessors, who, for six thousands years died on account of the sin of our first parents, would dare to offend God?

The fifth was on the fear of God, inspired by the thought of the end of the world, of the general resurrection, of the last judgment, followed by an eternity of torments for sinners, but of pleasures and delights for the just.

Let us bear in mind these words of Ecclesiasticus i, 22: "The fear of the Lord is a crown of wisdom, filling up peace 58 and the fruit of salvation." Let us often meditate upon the following advice of our Saviour: "Fear yet not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him, who can destroy both soul and body in hell"—Matt. x, 28.

The sixth lecture was on the glory, power and bounty of Mary the Mother of Jesus, the refuge of sinners; on the confidence we ought to have in her powerful intercession, and on the respect and love we owe to her, the most kind of mothers. The holy scriptures, tradition, and the continual practice of the Catholic church bear testimony to her glory, power, and bounty towards all who invoke her. Let us bear in mind what God said to the friends of Job, when they applied to Him for mercy and forgiveness of their sins: "Go to my servant Job and offer for yourselves a holocaust. And my servant Job shall pray for you; his face I will accept, that folly be not imputed to you."—xii. Mary the Mother of God is more powerful than Job, Moses, Peter and Paul, etc.. Poor sinners, let us have often recourse to her intercession! *Deo gratias*.

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No. XII. 1844—In the Spring Father Galtier Left Minnesota—Father Ravoux from that Epoch, till 1854, had under his Charge Mendota, St. Paul, etc.—1849—1850—He wrote several times to Rt. Rev. Bishop Hemmi of Milwaukee urging him very much to send a Priest to beside in St. Paul but in Vain—The Bishop could not, but the he Hoped before long the little City of St. Paul would have a Bishop resident in it—July 2, 1851, arrived Mgr. Cretin, the first Bishop of St. Paul—His Charity, his Zeal, his Good Works of all kind, till he Departed this Life, etc..

From the departure of Father Galtier, in the spring of 1844, till 1851, excluding the time of my two excursions to the Missouri River, and a few days I spent in Dubuque every year, I alternately resided in Mendota and St. Paul. For about three years, I was two consecutive Sundays in Mendota and the third one in St. Paul, preaching every Sunday in the French and English languages when at Mendota, doing the same at St. Paul as soon as we had

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in our congregation some members who did not understand the French, but this was not before 1848 or 1849.

In 1847 we had to make an addition to the chapel of St. Paul, erected by the Rev. Father Galtier, in 1841. The small chapel used by the Sisters of St. Joseph, till their removal to St. Joseph's Academy, formed the addition. In 1849 the chapel was again too small, and many of the faithful had to remain standing outside during the divine service. A great portion of the members of the Catholic church who overcrowded the chapel on Sundays, were not only those living in St. Paul, but many from Little Canada, St. Anthony, and Mendota, with others who resided two or three miles along 60 the left bank of the Mississippi. In 1847 the Catholic population becoming more numerous at St. Paul and around it than at Mendota and Fort Snelling, I had, then, the divine service in St. Paul every second Sunday. In 1849, the Catholics still continuing to increase on the left bank of the Mississippi, and yet unable to have a priest from the diocese of Milwaukee, I determined upon spending two Sundays in St. Paul, and the third one in Mendota. I wrote again to the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Milwaukee, describing to him the great wants of the Catholic population in this part of his diocese, and spoke to him on the necessity of sending a priest to reside in St. Paul. In my letter I urged him so much to provide for that portion of the flock intrusted to his care by Divine Providence, that, before terminating it, I thought it my duty to excuse myself for the liberty of my remarks. In his answer to me the good and pious bishop began his letter by these words: "I heartily forgive you for the kind lecture you read to a bishop; you are perfectly right, but you ought to be aware of the trouble, may, the impossibilities on the other side." Then the Right Rev. Bishop expresses his hope that, before long, a new diocese would be established for the Territory of Minnesota, and that St. Paul would be the place selected for the bishopric. The date of that letter is January 31st, 1850.

Late in the autumn of the same year, the bulls were sent from Rome to the Very Rev. Joseph Cretin; he had been elected bishop of St. Paul. I had the honor of receiving from him a letter which would have cause me the greatest pleasure had it not been for his

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indecision about accepting the charge. In his letter he told me that he was about to start for Europe, and that no determination would be taken by him for some time. He asked me to give him my advice on the acceptance or refusal of the new bishopric. Such a question surprised me very much. In my answer I pressed him to accept, showing him, by many reasons, how very necessary it was for the Catholics of this territory. I urgently requested him to come to St. Paul before his departure for Europe, in order to buy a location for his cathedral, informing him that entire blocks, in a suitable 61 place, began to be scarce; that perhaps, at his return, he could not find any except by paying a very high price. I did all in my power to encourage him to accept the bishopric offered to him. I went so far as to tell him in my letter, that things were in such a condition in this new territory that, according to my opinion, he was obliged, *sub gravi*, to give his consent to bear the load imposed upon him by Divine Providence. He wrote to me a second letter, but leaving me yet in great doubt whether he would or would not accept the charge.

After his departure for France, aware of the necessity of securing some lots for the cathedral and other purposes, I bought of Mr. Vital Guerin twenty-one lots for \$800, and for \$100 the lot on which now stands the cathedral. This last I bought of another person, who had already some lumber on the ground for a building. He had bought the same on credit of Mr. Vital Guerin for \$60. He ceded me that lot for \$40 profit. I considered the purchase of the twenty-two lots a very good bargain for the church, as also a good one for Mr. Vital Guerin, because it was understood that the cathedral and other buildings would be erected on block seven, and such improvements would increase the value of Mr. Vital Guerin's property. The event proved that I was not deceived in my expectation. The Right Rev. Bishop after his return from France, paid the money for the twenty-two lots and received the deed; I had but a bond for security of our bargains.

If I had some trouble in securing property for the church, the Right Rev. Bishop had much more trouble to come to the determination of accepting the bishopric of St. Paul. It was but one or two days previous to his consecration that he gave his consent, and I was told by himself, that he would never have done it, had it not been for the Right Rev. Bishop

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of Belley, Monseigneur Devie, for whom he had always the greatest respect on account of his talents and piety. He exposed to him the state of things in the new diocese of St. Paul, and asked him if he thought he could refuse the charge without sin. The opinion of Monseigneur Devie was, that he was bound, *sub gravi*, to accept. He then gave his consent and was consecrated on the 26th of January, 1851. *Omnia omnibus factus sum*” was the motto engraved on his seal, and in fact the first bishop of St. Paul, like the Apostle of Nations, was “all to all.” All those who have been well acquainted with him are convinced that he constantly walked in the footsteps of St. Paul, by zeal, piety, charity, humility, incessant labor and patience in sufferings; not only after his consecration, but also when a priest, when in the seminaire, and in the colleges. I was not acquainted with him, it is true, before 1838; but my assertion is founded on the testimony of persons who had been much edified by his conduct even when he was beginning his studies.

The Right Rev. Bishop spent yet three or four months in Europe after his consecration, in order to procure some laborers for the extensive vineyards intrusted to his care, and many things necessary for the establishment of a new diocese. On the day of the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the 2d of July, 1851, I had the long expected and desired visit of the Right Rev. Bishops, who arrived at St. Paul, accompanied by two priests and three seminarians. To describe the pleasure I felt at their arrival would be a difficult task. I had been for seven years without any brother priest, if I except a few weeks, during which another clergyman resided with me in St. Paul.

My first interview with the Rt. Rev. Bishop and his companions was on the boat, where I went to meet them. I had the honor of accompanying them from the boat to the episcopal palace. It did not take his lordship much time to visit all the apartments of the palace and the cathedral. The episcopal palace was a building one story and a half high, about seventeen or eighteen feet square. And the cathedral, the chapel described above, was a log building about forty-five feet long by eighteen wide. Near the palace stood another remarkable monument from ten to twelve feet square, which was used as a kitchen; a little further was the stable, which I had erected on the line of the claim, to prevent a second

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invasion of the property on that side, for the first one had given me trouble enough. The Rt. Rev. Bishop was not much surprised at the poverty of the 63 Catholic church in St. Paul, for he had been informed of everything. From the first, he saw hard labor before him, and, full of confidence in God, was not discouraged.

He put immediately his hand to the plough, and faithful to the advice of our Savior, did not look behind. He knew for whom he worked, and however difficult the task might be, supported by divine grace, he was always cheerful. Before the lapse of five months after his arrival in St. Paul, he had erected on block seven, in St. Paul proper, a brick building eighty-four feet long by forty-four wide, three stories and a half high, including the basement. That building became immediately the second cathedral of St. Paul, and also the second residence of the Rt. Rev. Bishop, of his priests and seminarians; and a few months after, some apartments of the basement were used as school rooms for boys. The young girls were also to be provided with Catholic schools, and in 1852 the Sisters of St. Joseph devoted themselves in St. Paul to the holy work of their institute, and they opened their schools on the property of the church, on Third Street. In 1853 he built the hospital, a portion of the expenses being defrayed by his own private funds. He built, also, the two small brick buildings near the hospital. Much gratitude is due to the generosity of Hon. H. M. Rice, for the greater portion of the hospital ground. In the same year the Rt. Rev. Bishop bought for a new Catholic cemetery the piece of land on which has been built St. Joseph's Academy, but the city limits having been afterwards extended farther, it was used only for three years as a cemetery. In 1856 he bought a piece of land, containing forty acres, for the same object. That cemetery was blessed on the 2d of November, 1856.

In order to pay the amount of these two pieces of land, he sold other church property in the city of St. Paul.

1855 the German Catholic congregation having been permitted to build a church on Rt. Rev. Bishop Cretin's block, they began immediately the work, and had divine service in it in 1856. Much praise is due to the Rev. Father G. Keller, then their pastor.

In 1856 the Rt. Rev. Bishop succeeded in having for his 64 diocese some Benedictine Fathers, who immediately built a convent at St. Cloud.

In July, 1854, was begun the work of the excavation for the basement of the cathedral, and two years after the corner-stone was blessed by the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Buffalo, Mgr. Timon. On the last day of October the walls were up to the water-table. If the work advanced so slowly, it was not for want of energy and exertion on part of the Rt. Rev. Bishop, but for want of money. Oh, how many times, seeing the pressed necessity of having a church which could furnish room enough for the Catholic population, he spoke to me about his difficulties. "But where to find the means!" he would at the same time exclaim. The Catholics living in St. Paul, with a few exceptions, were not able to help him much, and the price of work and materials was very high. He could have borrowed money, it is true, but he was afraid, with good reason, of incurring a debt, difficult to be afterwards discharged. Though the Catholic population attached to the cathedral was then nearly as numerous as it is now in 1864, the whole amount of money he could collect from July, 1854, till February, 1857, was not over four thousand dollars. In February, 1857, he had already expended seven thousand dollars towards the erection of the cathedral. Any one may judge of the difficulties he had to encounter. After that time they did not last very long. Our merciful God, witness of all the works of his good and faithful servant, saw that he was a most beautiful fruit of the divine grace, ripe for heaven; that his soul was shining with the splendor of all virtues, and took him from this world of woe to make him partaker of His eternal glory and happiness.

RT. REV. BISHOP CRETIN.

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No. XIII. Death of Rt. Rev. Bishop Cretin, February 22, 1857—His Zeal, His Patience in Suffering, His Courage in following Jesus Christ in the Path of all Virtues—Our Grief, our Sorrows cannot be Expressed—Father Ravoux was Appointed Administrator of the Diocese, Sede Vacants—His Troubles and Difficulties in having

A Church Large Enough for the Catholic Population of St. Paul—His Joy when God had sent Rt. Rev. Bishop Grace to take charge of the Diocese of St. Paul, etc..

The Rt. Rev. Bishop died on the 22d of February, 1857. His illness had been very long and painful, but he always continued to be the good and faithful servant of God, bearing with the greatest patience all his sufferings. When no more able to leave his room he almost constantly had his mind occupied about the flock intrusted to his care. He would often speak to me on that subject, and write letters to his friends in order to provide for the divers wants of his diocese. The last of these letters, which was addressed to a French bishop and left unfinished, was dated February 21st, 1857. More than once when his sufferings were most intense, I heard him exclaim: "It is good for me to suffer for my sins! *

* As I cannot work, I, at least, ought to offer my pains to God for the faithful and for all!"

Were I asked what epitaph ought to be written on his tomb, my answer would be, let these words be engraved upon it: "O God! the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up."

Could I ask the Catholics of Ferney, in France; and in America those of Dubuque, Prairie du Chien, and St. Paul, who, placed though at different times under his pastoral care, if the most lamented Bishop of St. Paul is worthy of such an inscription upon his tomb, I have no doubt but 66 they all would answer: His ardent zeal and charity for his fellow men, his constant labor, his mildness, his sincere humility and spirit of prayer were strong and convincing proofs to us all, that in his mind, in his heart, he had but two objects in view—the glory of God and the sanctification of souls—and that he is well entitled to have these words upon his tomb: "O God! the zeal of thy house health eaten me up." May his soul rest in peace forever!

The numerous virtues and charming qualities of the Rt. Rev. Bishop Cretin having very much endeared him to the inhabitants of St. Paul, his disappearance by death was felt deeply by them all, Catholics and non-Catholics. But no one was overwhelmed with a more profound grief than myself. I had lost the best of friends; I ought to say the best of

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fathers. The infant church of Minnesota, so much loved by me, was deprived of her first pastor, and in my mind its future prospects were not without clouds.

Who shall be sent to the afflicted and mourning church, to fight as well the good fight of the Lord, as did, for six years, her good, pious, and most devoted Bishops?

How long will it be before another be elected and receive the bulls from Rome?

Will the elect Bishop accept the charge?

And, in the interim, will the responsibility of the work be left in so feeble hands as mine, because I am, already, an old pioneer of the place?

These reflections were to me the cause of great anxiety; my weak constitution required rest, not a yet heavier task. What to do in such circumstances except to raise my mind up to God, *sursum corda*, and ask his assistance? This was, in fact, the only means which gave me strength and comfort in my affliction and difficulties.

In March, 1857, I received from the Most Rev. P. R. Kenrick, Archbishop of St. Louis, a letter which begins as follows: "The afflicting, but not unexpected news of the death of your late saintly and devoted Bishop, had been received here with profound regret by all his friends, and by none more so than by myself." In the same letter he appointed me administrator of the diocese, *sede vacante*.⁶⁷ From this moment I saw myself invested with great responsibility before man, and more so before God, the witness and supreme judge of all our actions, even of our most hidden thoughts, as also of our eternal destiny.

Of the many urgent duties incumbent on the administrator of this diocese, none appeared to me more pressing than the continuation of the building of the cathedral, however difficult it might be. The room used for divine service since 1851, could, indeed, scarcely contain the third part of the congregation. At the death of the Bishop the walls of the new cathedral were only up to the water-table; the dimensions of the building were 173 feet by 70; the

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price of a day's labor for masons \$3, for carpenters at least \$2, for a team of horses \$5. The pecuniary crisis of 1857 was on the point of breaking out. Money was scarce; interest on borrowed money excessively high, and I could not expect to collect in St. Paul much over \$5,000. In fact all collections made after the death of Rt. Rev. Bishop Cretin up to the arrival in St. Paul of Rt. Rev. Bishop Grace, in 1859, amounted only to \$5,372.70.

All those difficulties were weighed; so was also the great necessity of having a church spacious enough for the whole congregation; and then I took the determination of continuing the construction of the cathedral, and not to stop the work so long as I could have funds to defray the expenses; and to discontinue it so soon as I should have no more money. I never was much in favor of contracting heavy debts, knowing full well, from my boyhood, that it is very easy to create them, and often very difficult to have them discharged, particularly if they have been increased by heavy interests. How many happy families have become very unhappy, because the heads of those unfortunate families were regardless of this principle of prudence.

On the 14th of June, 1857, was begun the work which did not cease till the cathedral was under roof; and on the 13th of June, 1858, though unfinished and not even plastered, it was opened for divine service. The collections on that day amounted to \$428. The same summer the basement of the cathedral was plastered, and it was used for divine service 68 all the winter. Though very spacious, it was sometimes crowded. On Christmas night there was no less than 2,000 persons present at Mass; and about 500 presented themselves at the holy table for communion on that day. It was to me and to all a great consolation to have for the celebration of our sacred mysteries a place spacious enough to contain the whole congregation. We should have been very ungrateful to God, had we not rendered thanks to Him for His divine assistance, and I hope that no one forgot that important duty.

The following is an abstract of receipts, expenses and indebtedness for the erection of the cathedral up to January 1st, 1860:

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RECEIPTS.

Amount received up to July 30th, 1854 \$658.00

From that date up to January, 1857 3,162.50

\$3,820,60

After Rt. Rev. Bishop Cretin's death up to the arrival of Rt. Rev. Bishop Grace, 1859
5,372.70

Collection made for plastering the cathedral, &c., &c. 915.00

\$10,108.20

EXPENSES.

From August 26th, 1854, including a small sum expended before, up to February 10th,
1857 \$7,389.66

From March 7th, 1857, to August, 1859 23,564.44

After that epoch for plastering the church, &c., up to January 1st, 1860 2,693.84

\$33,647.94

Expenses were paid as follows:

By collections and donations as above specified \$10,108.20

By money received from the Society of the Propagation of the Faith, by pew rent, &c
18,987.59

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Indebtedness 4,552.15

\$33,647.94

In the beginning of 1859, I had to erect on Third street, a stone building seventy-three by fifty, three stories high. The motive was to make that property pay some taxes, and produce some revenue for the diocese. The expenses were not far from \$7,000. The half of these were paid with the funds of the diocese and the other half with borrowed money.

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A few days before the crisis of 1857, I had leased the parcel of land to a gentleman; but funds which he was to receive having been stopped, he requested me to break the agreement. I gave my consent, and he made me a donation of \$100 towards the erection of the cathedral.

May our good God bless all those who have contributed towards the erection of the cathedral! Their donations are recorded in heaven; even the poor widow's mite will not be left unrewarded.

The most essential duty of an administrator of a diocese, and of a pastor of souls, is to watch over his flock and, as much as it lies in his power, to feed the sheep intrusted to his care with the word of God and the sacraments of the church, which have been instituted by Jesus Christ to purify, sanctify and even deify our souls. It is the spirit of truth, who has taught the Church of God that, by the grace of those sacraments, we become partakers of divine nature— *divinæ consortes naturæ*.

Having been appointed administrator of the diocese of St. Paul, I understood well be the grace of God, all the extent of my obligations. But where was I to find immediately a sufficient number of devoted laborers to supply all the wants of a field so extensive, in which there was a Catholic population of about fifty thousand. At that epoch, seventeen

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priests composed the entire clergy of the diocese, the limits of which were the same as those of Minnesota Territory. My heart was very much grieved at the sight of so many thousand souls under my charge in danger of being lost because they had no pastor to break to them the bread of life, and I had none to send to them.

This impossibility of providing with priests all the new localities settled by Catholics was also a cause of a very deep affliction to the late Bishop of St. Paul. Every possible means had been tried by him to increase the number of missionaries in this part of our Lord's vineyard; he had knocked at every door where he had any hope of success, and during the six years of his episcopate he did not cease to invoke God by fervent prayers for the same object, ever mindful of these words of our Saviour: *The harvest indeed is great, but the labors are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.* Full of confidence in Mary, the mother of Jesus, his supplications to God were almost ever accompanied with some prayers to that holy queen, in order to obtain the favor of her intercession. He addressed himself often also to all the angels and saints of the heavenly court, and more than once he recommended me to do the same.

In 1853 the Rt. Rev. Bishop established in St. Paul a select school, in which the latin language was taught to a few young men who manifested some dispositions to the sacerdotal vocation. Of what number were the Rev. Fathers J. Ireland and T. O'Gorman, who were afterwards sent to France by the Bishop, in order to complete their studies and prepare themselves for the holy priesthood. This was in the autumn of 1853, when I had to make a journey to my native country. Before leaving St. Paul, the Bishop recommended me to bring him some priests or some seminarians. At my return I was accompanied by seven seminarians, Messrs. G. Keller, S. Sommereisen, F. Hurth, C. Robert, A. Oster, L. Caillet, and F. Tissot. Five of them were ordained priests by the late Bishop, and after his death the two others by the Bishop of Dubuque. From the time of their ordination they have been employed in the sacred ministry in this diocese. May they all live long, always full of zeal for the salvation of souls, in order to glorify God and enrich themselves and multitudes of others with those spiritual gifts, which are not subject to the vicissitudes of

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temporal events. My supplications are not less ardent for all the other members of the clergy of the diocese and I hope that I shall not be forgotten in their prayers.

We ought to mention also the Rev. Father D. Ledon, who for eight years exercise with great zeal the holy ministry in St. Anthony and St. Paul. Exhausted by too much labor, he was obliged to return to France in 1859.

In 1857 the good fathers of the order of St. Benedict were only four in this diocese, and the lay brothers of the same order six; but in 1858 the Benedictine fathers numbered eight, and the lay brothers ten. The increase of these 71 pious and devoted fathers was for me the cause of a great consolation. This diocese has contracted towards Rt. Rev. B. Wimmer, Abbot of St. Vincent, a debt of gratitude, which shall never be forgotten.

At the same period in 1857 the Sisters of St. Joseph had much increased in number—they had then under their charge in St. Paul an academy, a parochial school and a hospital, and in St. Anthony an academy and a parochial school. In November, 1858, the number of sisters was eighteen. The Benedictine Sisters had also a convent in St. Cloud. The services of these charitable, pious and devout virgins, consecrated to God, were then, as now, most useful to religion. May our merciful God increase more and more their number for the glory of His name, and the spiritual and temporal good of those in the midst of whom they live! May the virtue of their example spread abroad the good odour of Jesus Christ!

The first Bishop of St. Paul is no more; but the vineyard he has planted and watered for six years with the sweat of his brow shall, with the grace of God, continue to fructify and bring forth precious fruits to the end of the world. These happy fruits will be gathered up by the hand of God, and brought into His kingdom, to glorify Him and be glorified by Him for an endless eternity. The first Bishop of St. Paul is no more with us; but we hope that he is with God, that he has not forgotten his children in Jesus Christ, that his prayers for his flock, which were so fervent when upon earth, have now become more ardent, because

he better understands our wants. We have, then, many reasons to believe that if the year after his death we had a church spacious enough to contain the whole congregation; if, on the same year the number of the priests of the diocese was twenty-seven, having increased by ten since the year before, and if, the year after, in 1859, Divine Providence changed our days of grief and mourning into days of joy and gladness by sending us, as a gift from heaven, our present good, pious and devoted Bishop; we have, I say, many reasons to believe, that all these blessings came upon us principally through the prayers and intercession of our late Bishops, the founder of this diocese.

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No. XIV. The Hanging of Thirty-eight Sioux Indians at Mankato, 1862— Letter of Father Ravoux to Rt. Rev. Bishop Grace, dated December 29, 1862—It was written in French, and published in the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith in France— Also translated into English and published in Dublin, Ireland, in the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith—It appeared also in the Northwestern Chronicle, June 27, 1890—It was Published by Rev. Father Conway in order to correct some Errors and give a True Statement of the works of Divine Grace in the Hearts of the Poor Indians before they were Launched into Eternity.

St. Paul., December 29th., 1862.

My Lord : In compliance with your oft-expressed desire, I forward to you an account of my journey and my mission to the Indians confined in prison at Mankato during some months past. Thank God, my health has been much better than I could have hoped when I set out from St. Paul, and I was able every day, since Monday, to pass considerable time with those who suffered the penalty of death last Friday. The entire number amounted to thirty-eight.

On the 19th instant, I arrived at Mankato, and early next morning repaired to the colonel of the District, Mr. Miller, and presented to him a letter of recommendation from the brigadier-

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general of the military department, M. Sibley. I was very well received, and obtained every facility for seeing and instructing the Indian prisoners. I found them all together in one room. They numbered over three hundred, without counting more than sixty other savages who have been acquitted, and will be restored to their families near Fort Snelling, as soon as they can be conducted thither without danger, for the irritation of the citizens is still strongly excited against the Sioux.

Among the prisoners were several metizos, who seemed greatly delighted to see us. I spoke to them of God, of salvation, of the eternity for which we should all prepare ourselves by prayer, repentance, and receiving the sacraments. I also spoke to the Indians who listened to me with great attention. The names of those who were to suffer death had not yet been made known, and I feared much that the secret might be kept up to the last moment, and the principal aim of my mission be thus frustrated. Fortunately, that was not the case.

On Monday morning, Colonel Miller informed me that the Indians who were to be executed on the 26th of the month, were to be separated from the others, and he asked me to be at the new prison about three o'clock in the afternoon, at which time the sentence would be made known to them. Consequently, at three o'clock, the colonel and some officers, the Rev. Messrs. Williamson and Riggs, the Protestant ministers, the Rev. M. Sommereisen, and I, were assembled together at the prison. After reading the sentence in English and in the Sioux language, the colonel told the condemned that no hope remained for them in this life. He advised them to turn their thoughts towards the Redeemer of the world, and to choose, as they thought fit, for their spiritual adviser, a Catholic or a Protestant minister. Major Brown wrote out two lists; twenty-four had their names inscribed on that of the "black robes" (among them three metizos, under twenty years of age, who had not yet made their first communion). About a dozen put down their names on the Protestant list.

I was certainly surprised to find the larger number pronouncing in our favor, considering that Rev. Messrs. Williamson and Riggs have a perfect knowledge of the Sioux language,

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and have been for twenty-five years amongst them. It is true that I also passed some time with the Indians; but it is eighteen years since I quitted their deserts, owing to the want of priests among the white population. I must also remark that these gentleman had frequently 74 visited the prisoners, and had rendered them good service during their detention at Mankato. How then came they to prefer the 'black robes'? I know not unless it be the work of God, and the accomplishment of that promise of our Lord to His church and her ministers: "Go teach all nations."

From Monday up to the moment the Indians were regenerated in the waters of baptism, my instructions turned principally on the great God of heaven and earth who manifests Himself by the grand spectacle of nature to all, even the least civilized portion of humanity. Then followed the mystery of one God in three persons, the incarnation, the redemption of the world by the cross; death, judgment, heaven, hell, eternity, the glory of the just, the resurrection of the body at the end of time. The dogmas of our holy religion appeared to make a great impression on their minds, and I took great delight in discoursing to them of these great truths, which enlightened and consoled the poor savages, though many a wise man regards them with contempt. I cannot express the joy I experienced, seeing with what attention and respect the principles of our faith were received by the unfortunate Indians, who were so soon to bid an eternal adieu to this world.

And as prayer is the most efficacious means of enlightening the mind, we often had recourse to it. The sign of the cross, with the invocation of the Holy Trinity, the Our Father, a short invocation to Mary, the Apostles' Creed, the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, love of God and our neighbor, and the Act of Contrition, always mingled with our conversations during the four days preceding their execution. The piety with which they followed these exercises filled my heart with consolation. All acquainted with the manners and character of the Sioux are well aware how difficult it is to bring them to join the Christians in prayer. I can say without hesitation, that divine grace overflowed their souls; for it alone could have wrought such a change. More than once, when I found myself alone, tears flowed

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abundantly from my eyes at the recollection of the fervor with which they invoked the Most Holy Trinity.

I assure you, my lord, that the ardor of their faith, 75 their love of God, and the resignation with which they met death, were such, that several times I said to them in all sincerity: 'If you persevere in these sentiments, you will no sooner have breathed your last sigh than you will enter the kingdom of heaven, and, as a mother tenderly embraces her child, so will God give you, in that moment, the kiss of eternal peace' Oh! how often did I thus tell them not to fear death, but to love God with all their heart and all their strength, and that they should soon be encompassed with immortal glory, that their bodies should one day rise from the grave, resplendent as the sun, and be reunited to their souls to enjoy together a perfect and endless happiness. How they loved to listen to these beautiful and consoling promises of the Divine Redeemer!

One of them having asked me to get him a certain article of Indian apparel, I told him not to trouble himself about the beauty of his costume, but to beseech with all his heart the Master of life up to the last moment, and the robes in which he should be clothed would be whiter than snow, and more magnificent than the starry firmament. He appeared perfectly satisfied with my answer.

This Indian was chief of a tribe, and was called Shounka-Ska, White Dog. Many a time he assured me that he did not fear death. Nevertheless, he said to me day: 'My heart is troubled.' 'What is the matter.' I asked him. 'My brother, who is in the other prison, is very sick, and will soon die; go and see him, and tell him I wish you to instruct him and give him baptism.' I promised to visit him on leaving the prison; but having spent four consecutive hours with my good Sioux, I felt so fatigued, that I had to go take some nourishment and rest awhile, after which I set out to fulfill my promise.

Having entered the prison, I found, as I had been informed, the brother of Shounka-Ska very ill. I told him of the uneasiness and strong desire of the chief, and, on my own part

likewise, pressed him to study the religion of the 'black robe,' in order that he might receive baptism before his death. "I have just seen my brother," he replied, "and he spoke to me on the subject." This Indian likewise desires to be numbered among the flock of Jesus Christ.

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On leaving that prison, I repaired to the other, where I again saw Shounka-Ska. I informed him of my visit to his brother, and he was greatly pleased. The same Indian begged me to write from his dictation of few lines of farewell to his family and relatives, conjuring them to get themselves instructed and to receive baptism. 'He loves them all,' he says to them once more; 'he touches their hand for the last time, and promises that when he comes to the kingdom of the blessed, he will invoke the Master of life in their behalf.' The great majority of the Sioux who were converted, as well as the three metizos, wrote letters of much the same import to their families, and the rest charged me to see their relatives, and to convey the expression of like sentiments of zeal. May their prayers be heard! may their fervent supplications touch the heart of God, and draw down abundant grace to open their eyes, dispel their darkness, enlighten their mind, and convert their hearts by enflaming them with the divine fire of which Jesus, the Redeemer of the world, desired to see enkindled on the earth!

About six o'clock on Christmas morning, I gave Holy Communion to the three metizos. It was the first and last time they received the Bread of Angels. What a joy and consolation it was to them on the very day of their death to be united so intimately with Him who has said, "I am the life. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day." They were inexpressibly happy. One of them said several times, that he was no longer afraid of death; and I could well believe his words, for an expression of the deepest calm overspread his features. The two other metizos seemed equally animated with a sweet confidence.

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Two days previously, in order to console and strengthen them in their affliction, I told them that a great servant of God, a great saint, the blessed Alphonsus Liguori, affirms in one of his discourse that he who accepts death with resignation, desires to repair as much as he can the evil he has done, and is ready in all things to do the will of God, dies like a martyr. It seemed as if the spirit of God, through His infinite mercy, caused my words to fructify. To Him alone be 77 all honor and glory in time and eternity! For, truly it is He alone who opens all hearts and minds, fills them with divine unction, enlightens, touches, converts, and transforms them into the image of the great model, Jesus Christ, our Lord!

I left the prison about eight o'clock in the morning, and returned at about two o'clock in the afternoon. Then I gave my neophytes an instruction on the sacrament of baptism which they were about to receive. At four o'clock my fellow missionary, the Rev. M. Sommereisen, having come to join me, we put on our surplices, and I took the stole. We all joined together in prayer, and began to perform the ceremony at once. My heart overflowed with joy witnessing the fervor of the condemned, and considering the abundant graces which were about to be conferred on them in virtue of the blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross for the salvation of all men. I interrogated each in the usual manner, and they all in turn answered, in a tone of deep and steady faith. Thirty of them were baptized. I also gave conditional baptism to another Indian, who had many times besought me to confer that favor on him, though he had been baptized four or five days previously by a Presbyterian minister. This man was not executed. Two or three hours before the execution, he was brought out and placed with the other prisoners held in reserve, that his case might be reconsidered. It was thought that the witnesses had been mistaken about him, and that he was not guilty of murder, as had been supposed.

Of the thirty-eight Sioux who suffered death, thirty-three chose the "black robe" for their spiritual father, and I assure you, my lord, the Almighty inspired me with the feelings of a father in their behalf, for I loved them all with a great love in our Lord Jesus Christ, and I would willingly, I do believe, have given my blood and my life for the salvation of their

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souls, as indeed I told them more than once in the course of our interviews. Nevertheless, I had the grief of seeing one among those who had inscribed his name on my list refuse the grace of baptism; but God consoled me by inspiring ten others with the thought of having recourse to my ministry, after having listened for three days to our instructions and 78 the prayers we fervently sent up to heaven. The motive which prompted this unfortunate savage to refuse the grace of baptism was, I think, his attachment to the superstitious rites of his tribe. Another followed his example but his name had never been on my list. The three others were baptized by a Presbyterian minister. I can never recall the heavenly favors bestowed on these poor children of the desert without exclaiming: “*Hæc est dies quam fecit Dominus.*” —This is the day which the Lord has made.

No sooner were my neophytes regenerated in the waters of baptism, than they became quite content and resigned to their fate; no longer were any complaints or murmurs heard among them. They knew that death is the gate which admits the children of God to eternal happiness, and that the members of the risen Jesus will be raised up at the last day. Filled as they were with such great thoughts and such sweet hopes, the ensuing day, of which they were destined to live but some hours, appeared to have no terror for them. Next morning, they went to meet death, and mounted the scaffold without any sign of fear; they ranged themselves in the place assigned them; they met the stroke of death without a murmur of resistance, and braved all suffering, animated with great hope for the future. Thus it is that men, though only Christians of yesterday, can die. And is it any wonder that I should cry out: O, Lord Jesus! how wonderful is Thy name and how powerful Thy grace, with produces such marvelous effects!

Christmas day I remained with them from two o'clock in the afternoon to one o'clock at night. The time was not long going over; for I delighted in praying with the poor fellows and conversing with them in a group together, or with each in private. It was a great pleasure to me to talk awhile to each of them. In those moments of confidence, we spoke of the things of God; I discoursed on the happiness of heaven and the glory of the elect, which they should soon enjoy if they only continued to render themselves worthy of it by their

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fervor. This language was most gratifying to them. I considered myself happy in being able to assist to prepare them for the great journey to eternity. It was easy to see in the serenity of their countenances, the great calm which possessed their souls; and when they assured me that death had no terrors for them I found no difficulty in believing them.

Can you believe it, my lord, that with a very few exceptions, they slept soundly the last night of their life? I must not pass over in silence a fact of another kind, which filled me with astonishment and made an indelible impression on me. The Indian who had had his name inscribed on my list, but refused baptism, was far from enjoying the same peace of mind as the rest. On the contrary, he seemed very much agitated, and the disturbed expression of his features gave evidence of the interior agony he endured.

So great was my happiness in the midst of my dear neophytes, that I could hardly tear myself away from them. At one o'clock at night I left my little flock, repaired to the little house in which the Rev. M. Sommereisen was stopping, where, after saying matins and lauds, I took a little rest. At five o'clock, I offered the precious Victim of our Altar for the condemned who were so dear to me; praying the Almighty, that their death might be no more than a passage from this land of exile to eternal beatitude. During the time of the Holy Sacrifice my soul was deeply touched, and tears fell abundantly from my eyes at the thought that those for whom I prayed had only a few hours to live, and would soon be before the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge. And indeed, it was not the first time I was so afflicted. But I never shed tears in their presence; God always gave me strength to overcome my emotion and be calm enough to instruct and console them.

Mass being over, I hastened to my Indians, and found all, or nearly all, asleep. I had to awaken them. "Come away, my little flock," I cried; "you must arise, time presses and we must pray to God and prepare for death. Your pastor will have to leave you in one short hour." As soon as they were up, I gave them instructions, and we joined heart and soul in prayer. At seven o'clock they came to break their fetters and prepare for the execution. The moment having come, I found myself obliged to leave the prison, as I had received

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notice that previously night, with scarcely a hope of seeing them again. I went away therefore, but my thoughts, and heart, and soul, were with them; and the affection I bore them was so strong, that, with God's assistance, I made out a way of getting into the prison again, and had an additional hour to pray with my neophytes, and for last time exhort them to die without complaint or murmur, and render up their spirit courageously, like worthy sons of God, whose whole hope lay in the bliss of eternity.

I had scarcely left the prison, when I felt my heart torn with grief at the thought that I should no more see my dear Indians, or be with them during the three last hours of their life, the most terrible and most dangerous moments of all, on which would depend their eternal happiness or their everlasting misery. What was to be done? To whom could I address myself? I knew how good the colonel was, and I went to him, expressing my affliction and my uneasiness on the part of the poor Indians, from whom I was separated at the very moment my ministry would be of the greater use. My hopes were not deceived. That excellent officer gave me an order, by means of which I was enabled to cross the military lines, a similar favor having likewise been granted to the Rev. Mr. Williamson, the Presbyterian minister. Some minutes later I was at the prison door, trying to see if by any means I could penetrate to my dear neophytes. I stood some time before a window whence I could fix my eyes on them, and through which they could likewise see me. Even this mutual regard was a consolation to me.

When the last preparations were made, the captain on duty opened the door for me, and I had an opportunity of praying another hour with the condemned, and exhorting them to bring to a holy end their unhappy career; oftentimes recalling to them, that they would soon be perfectly happy if they only remained to their last breath faithful to their promises.

At ten o'clock, the captain who had charge of the execution came in; the last moment had come; they must go to receive their punishment. The Indians drew up two abreast, 81 and marched off together. I followed the sad train, advancing to meet death without fear, as I remarked before. During the few moments they stood on the scaffold, while

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the executioners were trying the fatal knot round their necks, I remained on my knees, invoking from my very heart the mercy of the God in their behalf. The expiation was short, and in an instant they were launched into eternity! May their souls rest in peace! May they rest happily in the bosom of God, and may their supplications obtain the grace of conversion for their unfortunate tribe!

"I should have been afraid, my lord, of tiring you with so long a narration, were I not aware how anxious your paternal heart would be to know every detail of the conversion of more than thirty persons confided to your care by the great Shepherd of souls, the good Jesus, the Redeemer of mankind.

In conclusion, allow me to tell your lordship, that your prayers as well as those of the clergy of the cathedral, and the pious souls who have taken so deep an interest in the success of our ministry; joined to the supplications of the Rev. M. Sommereisen, and the faithful of Mankato, no doubt, ascended on high like an odor of increase, and contributed in the highest degree to draw down the blessings of heaven on our poor Indians. I devoutly hope they are already in the kingdom of God, praying in their turn for all who have aided them to pass from their former state of darkness, and to enter into the way of salvation.

I remain, my Lord, etc., A. Ravoux, V. G.

To my letter to Rt. Rev. Bishop T. L. Grace, I will add two very short memoirs of some interest. The first will be on the Sioux, who were encamped near Fort Snelling in the beginning of 1863, and the second on two chieftains, Sioux, who were hung at Fort Snelling, November 11, 1865.

First Memoir —On the bank of the Minnesota River, at the foot of the hill of Fort Snelling, in the first part of 82 1863, were encamped some three hundred families of Sioux. They were often visited by Father Ravoux, who was always welcome by them. They knew how their friends, who had been hung at Mankato, had received the word of God, renounced their superstitions, become Christians, and died full of confidence in Jesus Christ. They

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had been informed also, that Sioux should follow their ample, and embrace the Christian religion, the religion of the black gown. 184 were baptized in their camp. Almost all of them were small children. A great number of them who were sick, died, and by the mercy of God, found a place ready for them in heaven. Among those who were baptized there was a man 100 years old.

Second Memoir —The two chieftains who were hung at Fort Snelling, were well known by many citizens of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Shakopee and Medicine Bottle were their names. Father Ravoux often visited them in their prison and instructed them on the principal truths of the Christian religion. Under the influence of the grace of God, they renounced paganism and all their superstitions; they believed in Jesus Christ, and in all His doctrines; they forgave their enemies, were baptized, received Holy Communion, and died full of confidence in their Saviour, who had shed His blood for their redemption. Their prayers to Him were frequent and fervent, especially during the night preceding the execution, also in the morning, and when going to the scaffold. They were accompanied by Father Ravoux who prayed with them till the fatal moment. Requiescant in pace!

In the St. Paul *Pioneer*, November 12, 1865, we read what follows:

“Shakopee and Medicine Bottle were visited in their cell at an early hour Father Ravoux, their spiritual adviser, who administered to them the sacrament, and remained in conversation with them until they were taken out. They had passed a good part of the night in repeating their prayers, and now as the hour of their execution approached, they seemed more and more absorbed in their devotions, and in listening to the conversation of Father Ravoux, who was 83 earnestly engaged in conversation with the doomed chiefs in their own tongue. One or two persons essayed to hold some conversation with them, but Father Ravoux would not allow them to be disturbed, and the conversation continued, as though no one was present.”

And further when they were prepared for the execution, the *Pioneer* says:

"They held their hands firmly and we could not notice a finger tremble. Father Ravoux stood up with them, still conversing with them. The prisoners commence again speaking their prayers which they scarcely ceased until they dropped from the gallows."

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No. XV. We add to our Reminiscences and Memoirs an Article written by Rev. Father Conway, Editor of the Northwestern Chronicle, and Published in that Paper in July, 1890—The Reader of that Article will find many Important Statements, full of Interest and Correcting many Mistakes—Chairman Merrill and our Educational Beginnings.

Absence from town prevented us from correcting in last week's issue some mistakes of Mr. D. D. Merrill in his speech to the National Educational Convention. The mistakes to which we refer belong to the ecclesiastical and educational history of the Northwest. Monsignor Ravoux, who is himself a part of the history of the period covered by Mr. Merrill, expressed great surprise to us when he read Mr. Merrill's address. This gentleman said: "The true historian must go down to the bed-rock of the historic mine for incipient facts and events, and even to the undefined forces of influence which brought the first teacher to Minnesota, the first professing Christian to St. Paul." The teacher referred to is Miss Harriet E. Bishop. In view of the fact that there are many old settlers living still who are professing Christians, and who here before Miss Bishop, Mr. Merrill's statement is a little more than a mere hyperbole. Mr. Merrill speaks in a grandiloquent way about going down to the bed-rock of the historic mine for incipient facts, and for this purpose he quotes at some length from a letter of the Rev. Dr. Williamson, written in 1847, when that gentleman was a missionary at Little Crow (Kaposia), now South St. Paul.

Dr. Williamson's letter to ex-Governor Slade, President of 85 the National Educational Society, asking that a Christian female teacher be sent to St. Paul, is given in part in Neill's history of Minnesota. We find the same letter almost entire in the history of St. Paul by Williams.

The letter makes some statements that are not true. It says: "I have had frequent occasion to visit the village and have been grieved to see so many children growing up entirely ignorant of God." The children were not growing up entirely ignorant of God. Of the sparse population of that day many were Catholics, knew their religion, and helped to teach their children. Monsignor Ravoux was here also and attended to the spiritual wants of the Catholics of Mendota and of St. Paul. Referring to the future attendance at the proposed school Dr. Williamson says: "Possibly the priest might deter some from attending, who might otherwise be able and willing." Dr. Williamson's fear of opposition from the priest was well grounded. The priest would certainly deter the children from attending a school under the influence of Dr. Williamson, not because the priest was opposed to education, but because he had reason to know that the Rev. Mr. Williamson would try to spread his religious tenets among Catholic children. The doctor was kind-hearted and charitable. He had studied and mastered the principles of medical science and this gave him a plausible excuse to enter Catholic families where he spread tracts and used words which no Catholic clergyman could allow conscientiously to pass. In a booklet of six lectures by Monsignor Ravoux, published in Dubuque in 1849, it is stated, that Dr. Williamson gave a pamphlet in the French language to a Catholic family in which pamphlet we read among other untrue things that the Catholic church makes a God of the priest, and that she accepts fasts, penances and money instead of virtues. Though noble-hearted and charitable, such was not the man under whose influence Catholic children could be allowed. Father Ravoux laid bare the false statements of the pamphlet on two Sundays in St. Paul and Mendota. He also gave a copy of his lectures to Dr. Williamson and no more was heard from that source, of tract distributing or of false statements of Catholic teaching.

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Mr. Merrill says in his speech: "On Saturday morning, July 13th, 1847, the trip had been accomplished, **** when from a canoe manned by two squaws, and the missionaries for chaperons she (Miss Bishop) looked on the scene of her future labors." In Williams' history of St. Paul we read: "On July 16th, 1847, she (Miss Bishop) was landed at Kaposia

by the steamer Argo.” The same authority tells how a day or two afterwards she was taken to St. Paul in a canoe paddled by two stout young squaws. Mr. Merrill says that Miss Bishop's commission covered the entire extent of territory between Wisconsin and the Rocky Mountains, and “north of Iowa down to the North Pole,” and that she was the first school teacher north of Iowa and west of Wisconsin. This is not the case. In 1838 four sisters, the Gray Nuns, as they are called, went to the country of the Red River of the North, now Manitoba. Their names were Sisters Valade, St. Joseph, Lafrance and Lagrave. Long before 1847 many other sisters of the same society passed through St. Paul for that northern country. We admire Miss Bishop's fineness of soul, her strength of character, and her Christian bravery; we rejoice at the laurels she has won here; but whatever human honors are due for first braving the dangers of frontier life and of northern latitudes as the first teachers, are due, not to Miss Bishop, but to the Gray Nuns.

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LECTURES.*

* See No. XI, page 52.

No. I. GOD IS BY HIMSELF. God alone exists by Himself—God is the Creator and Preserver of all things—God is our Good, Kind and Merciful Father—Him alone we must Respect and Love above all Creatures—Atheism is the Greatest of all Crimes.

The fool has said in his heart, There is no God!—Ps. xiii. 1.

Is there any reasonable man who can deny the existence of God? No; the foolish man alone can pronounce the horrible blasphemy—there is no God! The foolish man, that is to say, the most blind and unfortunate of men—a man corrupted by his perverse inclinations; a man chained by a multitude of vices interior or exterior, which tyrannize over him; a man unwilling to do violence to himself, in order to break his chains and set himself at liberty—such is the character of him who says in his heart, “There is no God!” His passions, his vices are the cause of all his evils. For, how could he otherwise have fallen into such a state of blindness, as to deny the existence of Him, whose glory is proclaimed by all

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creatures? How came he to discover that there is no God? A slave to evil passions and loaded with iniquities, he sees in futurity a God, the avenger of crime, His arm uplifted and ready to strike. At this sight his conscience cries 88 out to him: Miserable man, what dost thou do? Thou insultest the great God of the universe, thy Creator, thy Master, thy Judge; what wilt thou do when death shall cite thee to his tribunal? What wilt thou say in thy defense? Who will be able to protect thee against a God so powerful? He has created all things by His word, and by a single glance He can reduce them to nothing. All in thee and around thee speak to thy soul of His unlimited power. Thou knowest His law. Do thou good, it says, and an eternal happiness shall be the reward of thy obedience. Abstain from evil, or thou shalt be treated with the greatest rigor in the day of His wrath. At the voice of his conscience which tells him the truth, he feels troubled, agitated and tormented; fear seizes his mind, and a profound gloom settle in his heart; sensual pleasures cannot satisfy him; they last but a few moments, and are succeeded by dark presentiments of an unhappy eternity which he shall reach, perhaps before the end of the present day. The remorse which follows his crimes, accompanies him almost everywhere. O life! how bitter thou art! he exclaims from time to time. Happy he who has never seen the light of day! To blunt the sharp remorse which rends his heart, he then asks himself, Is there a God? Where is that God? I do not see him, therefore, there is no God. Stop! stop! O Atheist! O foolish man! There is no God, you say. Who told thee so? How long since thou has indulged in such language? Dost thou not listen too much to thy blind and brutal passions? Why dost thou hearken to them? Dost thou not know that they have deceived you a thousand times? Look into the past and thou shalt remember, that in thy youth, before evil passions had corrupted thy heart, all creatures spoke to thy soul of a God.

The Atheist is a monster in the society of men. He is to be feared as a robber and murderer, and a ferocious beast. His passions, his desires are the rule of his conduct. Woe to him, woe to her, who cannot protect herself against such a brute! If he encounters his fellowman, who carries his treasure, or something of great value, his brutal passions will cry to him: courage! courage! do not fear; there is no God; no 89 one beholds thee; run to

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him; take thy dagger, plunge it into his bosom; kill him, seize his treasure, fly with it, and thou shalt have wherewith to satisfy thy desires.

Men in power, think of it! reflect upon it! Impossible to you to satisfy the hunger and thirst of all those who surround you by their presence, by their friends and letters to ask of you some high, or at least pecuniary position, which, in the discharge of your official duties, you have to grant only to a certain number, to a few. If Atheists, if men who live only for this life, are refused in their request, what will their desire and conduct be? No doubt, to trouble your administration, and perhaps to assassinate you, if they can do it without too much danger to themselves.

Atheism is the greatest of all crimes; it is an insult, it is an outrage to the state, to the nation! May God open the eyes of the blind!

“I would,” says J. DeLa Bruyere, “see a man sober, modest, chaste, righteous, pronounce that there is no God; but such a man cannot he found.” The infield, J.J. Rousseau himself, gives on the same subject this advice: “Keep your soul in such a state that it may desire that God should always exist, and you shall never doubt of it.” Bayle, in his “Dictionnaire Historique et Critique,” expresses himself as follows: “In order to argue well of the production, it is necessary to consider God as the Creator of matter, and the first and only Principle of motion. If you cannot rise to the idea of a real Creator, you will not avoid all the rocks, and you will be compelled, on whatever side you may turn, to utter absurdities of which our reason cannot approve.” Cicero, the Roman orator, who lived about two thousand years ago, proclaimed the same truth in these words: “Among all nations, no one is so barbarous as not to know that there is a God, though it ignores His nature.”— *De. Leg.* And St. Paul declares that the crime of Atheists is inexcusable: “Because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God has manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: His eternal power also and divinity; so that they are inexcusable.”— *Rom. i, 19, 20.*

O, God of the universe! God of mercy and of light, enlighten the minds of all men; touch and inflame their hearts with Thy divine love, and, at the contemplation of Thy wonderful works, they all will praise Thy holy name all the days of their life!

There is a God; he is our Creator and our Sovereign Lord. All creatures who surround us, speak to our soul of His power, wisdom and bounty. Let us listen to their voice; their language is plain and clear; it is understood by all the nations and tribes of the universe; it does not require labor or study, but few moments' reflection only.

Let us consider the heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, and ask ourselves who has created these magnificent bodies? Who preserves their brightness? Who leads them with so much wisdom? Have they been formed by chance? Are they ruled by that imaginary power? Or, are they the work of an all-powerful God who governs them all by His providence? What can be easier than the solution of these questions? Has any man, before having lost the light of reason, attributed to chance the creation, or even the preservation of anything? What is chance? Is it not a mere word which we use to signify that we know now how such a thing happened, how such an event took place? How blind, then, that man would be, who should say that the word chance can produce or preserve any creature! Suppose that an hundred persons are traveling in an unexplored land, and that one of them should find a good watch, a fine picture, or a beautiful palace, though they should see no one there, would they not exclaim: This land has been inhabited by ingenious men. If one of them should say to the others: Be not so ready to attribute to men what we have found; you may be mistaken; it may be the work of chance, what would the answer of his companions be? Would they not laugh and say: We have a fool in our company, may his chance cure him. Thus, when we consider the heavens with attention and reflection, we are forced to exclaim willingly or unwillingly: Yes, an all-powerful God has made the sun, the moon and the stars; He alone preserves their beauty and directs them according to His will.

Let us cast our eyes upon the earth, and see what beauty and variety there are in the trees, flowers and fruits. Who has produced them? The earth, some may answer me. But, my friend, tell me by what power? By the power of God, or by its own power? It is not by its own power. Men, the most learned and the most powerful, with all their knowledge and power, could not make a tree, a flower, an herb or a leaf. How could the earth, which is a lifeless body, by itself make all the beautiful things we see upon its surface. Whoever still possesses but a faint ray of his reason, cannot but understand well that God works in its bosom, and is the author of all its production. O, how many other proofs of the wisdom, power and bounty of God! Interrogate your soul, and ask it, who commands the days and nights to come alternately, and to give us the wonderful spectacle of light and darkness? Who calls upon the earth during the winter a deadly wind that destroys the meadow's grass, trees, leaves and flowers? Who orders the spring to come in its turn, the clouds to send no more snow, but to pour down soft rain? Who gives command to the wind to change in some manner its nature, to become warm and to help by its mild influence the rays of the sun to melt the ice and snow, and to open our rivers, lakes and seas? Who fertilizes our fields? Who loads our trees with sweet fruits? Who covers our plains and hills with rich harvests? After these questions will you not cry out with admiration: O God, infinitely good, infinitely powerful, and infinitely wise, Thou caust hide Thy face from our fleshy eyes, but Thy works are so great, so admirable, so striking that they unfold everywhere to our spiritual sight Thy wisdom, Thy power, and Thy goodness? O, do not forget that beautiful answer that comes from the bottom of your soul! As often as you will consult it upon this subject, you will hear the same answer resounding in your heart.

Does the impious or foolish man ask of you, where is your God? Reply to him: Though invisible, God is everywhere. All creatures are the works of His hands and receive His orders with respect. Rain, ice and snow fall upon the earth at His will. Clouds, lighting and thunder know His voice. With a glance He can shake mountains, and split rocks asunder. He commands the sun, the moon and the stars, and they never refuse to execute

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His orders. He sustains birds flying in the air; He has filled the sea with many kinds of fish; He has placed upon the earth multitudes of animals of divers forms; He feels them all by His power and bounty, and not one resists His will.

If the impious refuses to acknowledge the voice of all creatures which surround him, say to him, ask these questions of thyself: A few years ago I was not upon earth; who has given me the life I possess? My parents were the instruments by which I came into this world, but they have not created me. Should I lose by some accident one of my members, one hand or one foot, my tongue, or one of my eyes, could they or any person else restore it to me? No, they could not; and never came it to the mind of any one, that a man could perform by himself, by his own power, such a wonderful work. Now, if my parents, or any man upon earth, could not create for me one member and replace it in its natural position, how could I imagine that they are the authors of all my bones, nerves, sinews, flesh and blood? O, wise, very wise was that mother, who, exhorting her seven sons to die rather than offend God, said to them: "I know not how you were formed in my womb, for neither I gave you breath, nor soul, nor life; neither did I frame the limbs of every one of you. But the Creator of the world that formed the nativity of man, and that found out the origin of all, He will restore to you again in His mercy, both breath and life, as now you despise yourselves for the sake of His laws."—Macchabees 11, ch. vii. 22-23. Wise, also, was the holy man, who addressed himself to God as follows: "Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me wholly round about. *** Thou hast made me as the clay. *** Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh; Thou hast put me together with bones and sinews; Thou hast granted me life and mercy, and Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit."—Job x. Our parents are not the authors of our bodies, how much less could our souls have been created by them.

Let the impious make also the following reflections and 93 he will understand still better the state of his blindness and folly: I remember that I have been a little child. Who has given increase to my body? It is not myself; I do not comprehend how it has been done. And now, at this present time, I see, I speak, I move, I can walk. Who gives to my eyes

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the faculty of seeing the objects exposed to my sight? Who gives to my tongue the power of speaking to my fellow-creatures? Who gives to my ears an ability to hear their conversation? Who gives to my feet strength to move and walk? Who gives to my fingers the power of grasping what I want? I keep a remembrance of facts which happened years ago. I am free in my deliberations; I can bless the name of God, or not do it. I know what is right or what is wrong. It is right to help my benefactors, it is wrong to betray them. It is good to love a friend, it is wrong to attempt his life. This is the voice of my soul. Who has bestowed on me that soul, the best part of my being? Is it not an all-powerful God, the Creator and Preserver of all things? Is it not He who has given increase to my body? Is it not He who has given to my soul and to my members all their faculties? If it is not to an all-powerful God to whom I am indebted for my whole being, is it to chance? Is it to nothing? Chance is a mere word unable to produce any effect. Nothing cannot create anything, therefore, I am forced to acknowledge that an all-powerful God is the Creator of my body and soul. Would to God that the impious would often make such reflections.

Then ashamed of himself he would confess his error; he would prostrate himself before God, his Creator, and say to Him with a heart broken with sorrow: O, my God, spare me, I am the work of Thy hands; I am most guilty for having refused Thee the homage due to my Creator and Sovereign Lord. Have mercy on me! Before reducing my body to ashes, grant me the spirit of penance, that I may weep over my sins the remainder of my life!

All nations and tribes of the universe acknowledge a Supreme Being. They were brought out from nothing by His infinite goodness; they are all preserved by His providence, and their wants are supplied by His bountiful hand. 94 We are all indebted to Him not only for the qualities of our bodies and souls, but also for our food, clothing, parents, relations, friends, and whatsoever we may possess. We ought then to evince to Him our gratitude. The man who does not render homage to God is a monster in the universe; he is not worthy to be compared even with the brutes. The brute itself does not forget what it has received from its benefactors. Domestic animals are grateful to their master for a bone or a small piece of bread which they receive from his hand. How could anyone refrain from

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evincing his gratitude to God in public and private, did he not forget the innumerable favors granted to him by His infinite mercy? Had all the poor inhabitants of a village been often loaded with precious gifts by a rich and virtuous man, would they not love him? Would they not express to him their gratitude in public and private? Let them blush, let them be covered with confusion who refuse to pay to God public and private homage.

There is a God; He is the Creator and Preserver of mankind; He is our Lord and Sovereign Master. We ought, then, to worship Him, and obey His commands when known to us.

But where shall we find the manifestation of His divine will towards us? We shall discover it in Christianity, and in Christianity alone, as will be proved in another lecture. Before reading it, if you are one of those who do not believe the Christian religion to be the work of God, pray to Him in the following manner: O, my God, though I do not see Thy face, yet Thy wonderful works show me Thy presence everywhere. When I contemplate them I am filled with fear, respect and love, and I am forced to exclaim: O, all-powerful God, permit that I, who am but dust and ashes, should speak to Thee. I adore Thee with the most perfect love; receive my thanks for all the gifts Thou hast bestowed upon me! Great and merciful God be Thyself my teacher! Show me the path I must follow to be admitted among Thy friends! Make known to me whether Christians alone render to Thee the homage worthy of Thy regard! Nothing shall be able to hinder me from accomplishing Thy will, 95 when known to me! Promises, threatenings, chains, prisons, torments, death itself, shall never induce me to forsake Thy sacred laws!

Often repeat this prayer, and commit no act against the law of your conscience, I mean the natural law. If you follow this advice, and read the proofs of Christianity with attention and reflection, God will come to your help, He will enlighten your intellect, and you will believe the doctrines taught by Jesus Christ; you will put in practice the rules of Christianity; and then you will prefer the title of Christian to all the riches, honors and pleasures of this world.

May the God of all wisdom pour down His divine light into your souls, and give you strength to observe faithfully all His commands, that, after this life, full of evils, you may be admitted to enjoy His happiness and glory forever!

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No. II. THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. Christianity is the Work of God—No Power can Destroy It—Let all your Works be According to the Laws of Jesus Christ, and they will Glorify you Forever in Heaven—Woe to him who Refuses to obey His Precepts.

If God be for us, who is against us?—Romans viii.31.

Though all the enemies of Christianity should meet together to form new plots against Jesus and His followers, though they should arm themselves with fire and sword to put to death the children of Christianity, and to destroy the religion of Jesus, all their efforts would be vain. God is for us, Christians; God the creator and preserver of all things; He, who by a single word can reduce to dust all his enemies, is for us, with us, and in us. What have we to fear? He considers all their ways; all their thoughts are known to Him. He would laugh at their insane endeavors; all their darts should turn against themselves. Who ever fought against the Almighty and was victorious? Caligula, Nero, Celsus, Porphyry, Julian, Voltaire, and thousands of others, their disciples, tried every means against Christianity. Have they destroyed it? Have they diminished its vigor? Have they not been covered with shame? Did not many of them repent of their madness, as St. Paul? Did not many others, who were persecutors to the end of their lives, die a most unfortunate death, as Julian the Apostate? Read the history of the persecutors of Christianity by Lactantius, *Mors Persecutorum*, or the work of Josephus, a Jewish writer, *De bello 97 Judaico*, or the history of the Church, and you will understand that the finger of God was there.

Do infidels speak with pride against our holy and divine religion? Do they gather together to effect its destruction? Be not alarmed; they cannot succeed. Say to yourselves: Christianity has been established by the Omnipotent to last till the end of the world; *no*

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power can destroy it. Pray to God to enlighten your minds; read with attention this lecture, reflect on it, and you will be more and more convinced that Christianity is the work of God.

O, how beautiful is Christianity! how pure! how holy! how sublime! how consoling to the virtuous man! how dreadful to him who follows his evil passions! how austere in its maxims! It shows us a God who is everywhere, who sees all our actions, who knows all our thoughts, who has created all beings, who preserves them all by His goodness, who can destroy them all by His power. It makes us know the history of all our woes; our birth in tears, our days spent in grief, and our death in sufferings. It explains to us how we became children of wrath, and how we can be restored to the friendship of God. It excites us to the most heroic virtues with the hope of an eternity of happiness, and it checks our most violent passions with the fear of an eternal punishment. Its laws are most pure and holy. Reflect on these precepts of its divine founder: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength, and with all thy mind *** *and thy neighbor as thyself.*” —Matt. xxii. 37-39.

“Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that prescribe you and calumniate you.” —Matt. v. 44.

Be pure in thought, words and actions, for “I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, death already committed adultery with her in his heart.” —Matt. v. 28.

Do violence to yourselves; make continual war against your evil inclinations; keep all my commands and a great, an immense reward will be given to you in heaven. But whosoever shall refuse to obey my precepts and die guilty of 98 a mortal sin, shall be condemned to everlasting flames. Remember that “the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away.” —Matt. xi. 12. Hence, all they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences.—St. Paul to the Gal. v. 24.

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Reflect on these precepts and doctrines of Jesus, and pray your Creator to send His divine rays into your souls; and then you shall exclaim; God alone is the author of Christianity!

The prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, the founder of the Christian religion, furnish us another proof of its divine origin. His birth, His actions, His miracles, His sufferings, His death, His resurrection and His ascension into heaven were foretold by the prophets of the Jewish nation, many centuries before the event. They were, then, instructed by divine inspiration.

Daniel announces at what time He shall come.—Dan. ix. Micheas foretells that Bethlehem shall be the place of His birth.—Micheas v. David speaks of the kings of the East coming to adore Him and offer gifts to Him.—Psalm lxxi. Aggeus publishes the glory of the second temple, because it is to be visited by the desired of nations.—Aggeus ii. Isaias hears the voice of the precursor of the Messiah crying out in the desert, to prepare the way of the Lord.—Isaias xl. 3. According to the same prophet, His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace.—ix. 6. Then the blind shall see, the deaf shall hear, the lame shall leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be set free.—xxxv. “He shall be a sanctification to you,” (who fear God) “but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offense to the two houses of Israel.”—viii. 14. For He shall be despised among them, and the most abject of men. He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter for our sins. But by His sufferings for the guilty, He shall become a chief of a numerous posterity.—liii. It is the church to which the Gentiles shall run from all sides.—liv. David beheld His hands and feet pierced, His body covered with wounds, He cruel death, the lots cast for His upper vestments, His glorious resurrection, His ascension 99 into heaven, His sitting at the right hand of His Father for ever.—Psalm lxviii, xxi, xv and civ. Daniel speaks of the abolition of the old sacrifices, of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.—ix, 2627. Malachias declares that God has no more pleasure among the Jews, that He shall reject all their sacrifices, and that a new holocaust shall be offered to Him by the Gentiles throughout the world.—i. 10,11.

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Read the New Testament and you will see that all the prophecies concerning the Messiah have been accomplished in the person of Jesus Christ. The other prophecies above mentioned have also received their fulfillment. All these prophecies are recorded in the sacred volumes of the Jews, who are enemies to the Christian name. They are read in their bibles as in ours. What a proof in favor of Christianity! Who, casting aside all prejudice, does not see that the Jews have been disposed throughout all nations of the world, by the permission of Divine Providence, in order to the accomplishment of what is contained in their sacred volumes, and as living proofs of the truth of Christianity?

The books of the New Testament, considered as books uninspired, should be sufficient to prove the truth of the Christian religion. We read in these books that Jesus, the founder of it, was a great worker of miracles in favor of His doctrines. At His voice the lame walked, the blind saw, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, the sick were healed, the dead were restored to life. He walked upon the sea, He fed thousands of people with a few loaves, He commanded the sea, and He was obeyed; the devils themselves acknowledged His power.

But could not some infidels object, that, in spite of His miracle, He was reviled, persecuted and crucified? It is true, and we are not ashamed of his humiliations and sufferings. He was seized like a criminal, He was mocked, spit upon, scourged, crowned with thorns, sentenced to death, crucified, and He expired amidst the most horrible tortures. But at His death the sun was darkened, the earth shook, rocks were split asunder, the dead came from their tombs, and on the third day after His death, according to His prediction, He arose from His sepulchre, and the soldiers who guarded it, 100 fell as if dead. After His resurrection, He conversed with His disciples, at different times, during forty days previous to His ascension into heaven, of which they were witnesses. In one of these apparitions, more than five hundred persons, who were gathered together, saw Him arisen from the dead.

We also read in the New Testament that Jesus Christ commanded His Apostles to preach His doctrine to the whole world. He promised to them the power of working miracles in support of it. Accordingly, as soon as they had received the Holy Ghost, ten days after His ascension into heaven they went, preached the Christian religion and accompanied their preaching with miracles. By two sermons St. Peter converted more than eight thousand persons, and observe that it was in the same place where his divine Master, fifty-three days before had been crucified. The Apostles were threatened and ordered to desist from preaching that new religion. But, setting aside all fear, they answered that it was better to obey God than men. They continued to fulfill their mission as before, and preferred to be cast into prison, rather than desist from what they had been commissioned to accomplish. St. Peter was loaded with chains, but the Lord sent to him an angel, who broke his chains, and opened the doors of his dungeon. The other Apostles having also recovered their liberty, they all preached, as before, Jesus Christ and His doctrine. They were again in danger of losing their liberty and their lives; but they thought themselves happy in suffering persecution in so good a cause, and even in shedding their blood, in order to testify by their sufferings and tortures, to the truth of what they announced. At last they suffered martyrdom for Christianity.— *Acts of the Apostles*.—*History of the Church*.

Who can refuse to believe the testimony of men who despise torments and death; who, with patience and joy, suffer and die in tortures to attest what they have seen and heard?

Infidels may ask us for proof concerning the facts related in the New Testament. With the help of God, we will endeavor to remove all doubts on a subject of so great importance. The facts related in the New Testament are 101 true, if the writers of it were not deceived, if they would not deceive, if they could not deceive, and if their writings were not falsified in the following centuries.

First. —They were not deceived about the facts they relate. Some of them had been eye-witnesses of the facts they have recorded. The others knew them by public report as stated by themselves in their own writings. The facts they relate in favor of Christianity are

miracles of the most striking character, as for example, when it said they saw Jesus walk upon the sea, feed thousands of people with a few loaves, restore the dead to life, and show Himself to hundreds of persons after His resurrection from the dead. Their writings prove also that they were men of sound judgment. Therefore, they were not deceived.

Second. —They would not deceive. No man is a deceiver in facts of great importance without a motive. What motive could the writers of the New Testament have had for endeavoring to deceive mankind? Had they any hope of gain? No; for they left all to follow Jesus, whose maxims were: Except a man forsake all that he possesseth, he can not be my disciple—Blessed are the poor—Woe to the rich. Was it a desire of honor? No; for they knew and announced that they should be despised and persecuted like their divine Master. By their words and actions they gave strong proofs of sincere humility. In their own writings they exposed to the world, the humbleness of their birth and occupations, their ignorance, their cowardice at the death of Jesus, and their numerous faults. Were they induced to write in expectation of enjoying some of the pleasures of this life? No; on the contrary, prisons, chains, tortures and death were all they could hope for, in announcing to the Jews and Pagans a religion so much opposed to their passions and desires. These were all the promises they had received for this world from their divine Master. Hence, if they were not afraid of persecution and death, was it not because they firmly believed in the promise of an eternal reward He had made to them? Therefore, they had no motive to deceive and would not deceive.

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Third. —Even if they had had a motive to deceive their fellow creatures, they could not have done so. After the death of Jesus Christ, the Apostles and many others of His disciples wrought miracles favor of Christianity in presence of a great number of witnesses, as recorded in their writings, and at a time when many of these were yet living; for they speak of the temple as still existing, yet it was destroyed about forty years after the death of Jesus Christ. Had their relation been false, many persons would have discovered the falsehood, and their design would have been without effect. Pagans, Jews

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and heretics of the first centuries do not deny the wonderful works related in a the New Testament. The Pagans attributed then to witchcraft. Among them we can cite Celsus, Porphyry, Hierocles, Philostrates and Julian. The Jews ascribed them to the power of the devil. The heretics gave full credit to the authority of the gospel, though their explanation of the doctrine it contained was false. Would they not have discovered the forgery, had the sacred penmen been guilty of such a crime? Would they not have left upon the page of history a relation of the falsehood? Would so many Pagans and Jews who then embraced Christianity, a religion so austere, so contrary to human passions, have done it, had they any doubt as to the truth of the miracles of Jesus and His Apostles? Therefore, the writers of the New Testament could not have deceived mankind, even if they had had a motive to do so.

Fourth. —The facts related in the New Testament were not falsified in the following centuries. The Church, at all times, has kept with great care and profound veneration the books of the New Testament. Our fathers in the faith were accustomed, in their assemblies, to listen to the reading and explantation of the Holy Scriptures, given by the ministers of the Church. The books of the New Testament were translated into many different languages, and were used by many nations from the beginning of Christianity. Suppose that any nation should have endeavored to corrupt or falsify the sacred volumes, would not the others have discovered the falsification and committed a statement of it to history? To falsify the sacred writings, was an impossibility, 103 even for a single nation. The first Christian paid so much respect to them that they preferred death rather than to deliver them to the enemies of Christianity who wished to destroy all the sacred volumes. If some Christians, overcome by tortures, delivered them to be consumed by fire, they were no more numbered with the faithful, unless the repented, and submitted to the severe penance imposed upon them by the church. Who now can suppose that the New Testament could have been falsified without having excited a general protest against the falsification, throughout all Christendom? But we have no sign of such a protest. Therefore, the books of the New Testament were not corrupted in the first centuries of

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Christianity, nor, for the same reasons were they in the following ones, down to our own days. Therefore, the facts they contain are true, and Christianity is the work of God.

To convince you more fully of the truth of the facts related in the New Testament, permit me to ask you the following questions: Do you believe the principal facts related in the history of the United States? Do you believe what the histories of this country say Washington did and suffered to procure to its people the rights of freedom? Yes, we believe it without doubt, you reply. Do you think these facts will be believed after the lapse of two or three hundred years? Yes, we think they will, even after two or three thousand years, if the world exists so long; we think they will be believed without doubt to the end of the world; for no change of importance can be made in these facts, without its being immediately noticed by many writers, and the man guilty of the falsification would be loaded with disgrace. Now examine if the facts concerning Christ, related in the New Testament by writers are of less importance than those concerning Washington. You know that however important for this country the facts concerning Washington may be, yet the facts concerning Jesus Christ, as related in the New Testament, are of far greater importance, because they affect the temporal and spiritual welfare of the whole world. Hence not one nation only, but all nations of the earth are watching to keep them without falsification; for from 104 the beginning of Christianity, the followers of Jesus have been spread over nearly all the surface of the globe. Therefore, these facts could not be falsified; therefore, these facts are true, and we can say with Richard of St. Victor: "If what we believe, O Lord, is an error, thou hast deceived us, for the miracles in favor of Christianity are so striking, that none except Thyself could have wrought them."

Infidels themselves were sometimes so much struck with admiration in reading the New Testament that they could not avoid rendering testimony to the truth. Hear Jean Jacques Rousseau, one of the patriarchs of infidels: "I acknowledge to you," says he, "that the majesty of the scriptures astonishes me, the sanctity of the gospel speaks to my heart. Read the works of the philosophers with all their pomp, how mean are they, when compared with the gospel. It is possible that a book so sublime, and so simple should

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be the work of men? Is it possible that he whose history it relates should be himself no more than a man? Is there the tone of an enthusiast or of an ambitious sectary? What sweetness! What purity in his morals! What moving gracefulness in his instructions! What elevation in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what skill, what exactness in his replies! What strength over his passions! Where is the man, where is the philosopher who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die without weakness, and without ostentation?" He then draws a comparison between Socrates and Jesus, and finishes it by these words: "Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God. Shall we say that the history of the gospel is a mere fiction? My friend, it has none of the qualities of a fiction, and the facts of the life of Socrates which no one doubts, are not so well attested as those of Jesus Christ. After all, it is to waive the difficulty without destroying it. It would be more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to forge such a book, than that only one should have furnished the subject of it. The Jewish authors could never have found that tone, nor that morality, and the gospel has such characteristics of truth, so great, so 105 striking, so perfectly inimitable, that the inventor of such a history would be more astonishing than the hero himself."— *Emile*, 3d vol.

Let us consider now the progress of Christianity in its birth amidst the greatest obstacles, and we shall have a new proof of its divine institution. Jews and Pagans rose against it with great fury. Jesus, its founder, was put to death, and their followers had to partake of the chalice of sorrows for three centuries, as attested by Pagan, Jewish and Christian writers. The blood of the followers of Jesus flowed in towns and cities; their enemies made use of every kind of torture to force them to renounce Christianity. But, O wisdom! O power of God! Nothing is impossible to thee! The Christians were put to death by thousands, and their numbers increased every day. Their blood was the seed of new Christians, according to the expression of Tertullian. And remark that among them, were men of great learning, as Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin, Irenæus and a multitude of others. Sustained by the divine assistance, the Christians had no fear of death. Consumed by fire, devoured by wild

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beasts, or cut into pieces by the sword, they did not complain. They prayed to God for their persecutors, many of whom became Christians, ranked themselves among the martyrs, and were baptized in their blood.

O death! cruel death! who rendered thee so pleasant to the martyrs of Christianity? Glory, eternal glory, to God! He alone could give strength and joy to them in the midst of torments; He alone could preserve Christianity from destruction, amidst the storms of presecution, which were so many and so terrible.

We will now advert to the prediction concerning Jerusalem, its temple and inhabitants. Jesus foretold to the Jews the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, as also the evils which were to befall them and their children. Speaking of Jerusalem, he uttered these words: "For the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee and encompass thee around, and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee, and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a 106 stone."—Luke xix. 43-44. In another place he added: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captives into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, till the times of the nations be fulfilled."—Luke xix. 25. And when he was going to mount Calvary to be crucified, he said to the women who wept over Him: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me; but weep for yourselves, and for your children."—Luke xxiii. 28.

Josephus and Philo, two Jewish historians, who lived in the beginning of Christianity, have recorded the evils which befell their nation a few years after the death of Jesus Christ, during the reigns of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero. Oppressed by the Romans the Jews rebelled against them; the Romans surrounded Jerusalem with a powerful army; famine and dissension among the Jews were horrible, and enabled the Romans the more easily to overcome them. So great were their sufferings, that a mother is said to have killed and roasted her own child, to appease her devouring hunger. At last the city was overthrown; the temple reduced to ashes, eleven hundred thousand Jews were

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slain or perished during the siege, ninety-seven thousand were carried captives, and afterwards were either publicly put to death, or sold as slaves (See Josephus, book vi.). Remember the cries of the Jews in presence of Pilate: "His blood be upon us, and upon our children."—Matt. xxvii. 25. Hence a pagan writer named Phlegon, who lived in the second century, after due consideration on the prediction of Jesus, said that no man ever had before foretold things so certain to come, or that were accomplished with so much precision.—(*Phlegon thra. lib. annual.*)

Let us now make a few reflections on the mysteries of Christianity, in order to demonstrate the false reasoning of unbelievers on the subject. The mysteries of Christianity are beyond the reach of human understanding, as for example, the mystery of three divine persons in one God; the Son of God suffering and dying on a cross for the sins of mankind; the resurrection of our bodies on the last day. God has revealed these mysteries to men, and we are obliged to believe them, because God is truth and cannot deceive us. Proud 107 unbelievers have told you, perhaps, more than once, with a smile: "Who, except ignorant or superstitious men, can believe such mysteries?" You may answer them: These mysteries as well as others which are contained in the Holy Scriptures, are above the reach of our reason, but they are not against our reason. We believe them because God has revealed them to mankind, and all men who have not lost the light of reason know that the knowledge of God is infinite, and ours very limited. If, dissatisfied with such an answer, they tell you that a true philosopher cannot believe any thing, except what he understands well, ask them the following questions: Do you believe that a few years ago you were not? Do you believe that you have been little children, and now are men? Do you believe that from the earth spring grass, trees, bushes, flowers, and fruits of a thousand kinds? Now, tell us sincerely, if you understand well all these wonderful works of God? Should they answer we do, they would speak against their own conscience, and no one would rely on their assertion, for every one knows that these also are mysteries above the reach of our understanding. At every moment of the day we behold around us an innumerable

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multitude of mysteries which we believe; why then, refuse our belief to those taught to men by God Himself?

Nay, our mysteries are proof in favor of Christianity; for, who, having the intention to invent a new religion, would dare propose such mysteries, for the belief of his fellow creatures? Who could have formed them in his mind? Suppose a man would have invented such mysteries, would they have been believed without miracles to sustain them? But God would never give to impostors the power of healing the sick and restoring the dead to life, for the purpose of deceiving mankind. Therefore, these mysteries have been revealed by the deity.

If you read the history of Christianity with reflection, you will find an innumerable multitude of facts, all attesting that God is the author of it.

Yes, O Christianity, thou art indeed the work of God! Day and night thy divine architect watches over thee! Fear not thy numerous foes; they shall never destroy thee or fetter thee as a slave! If, time after time, the blood of thy children shall be poured out to satiate the infernal hatred of thy enemies, falter not or say: God has forsaken me. No, God has not forsaken thee! He never will! The heavens and the earth shall pass away before God shall abandon thee without sweet consolations among thy persecutors! In times past, millions of thy true children in order to give public testimony of their love towards thee, suffered and died in the midst of torments! In our days, thousands of them have yet to suffer; in time to come, many others shall yet have to suffer and give up their lives for thee! Persecution shall not cease till the end of the world! Nevertheless be not overwhelmed with grief, but rather rejoice in considering the glory of those who, having been tried and purified by tribulation, like gold by fire, now enjoy an eternal happiness in heaven! Yes, rejoice, even in time of persecution, for the time of persecution is the time of the harvest for thee! Remember the three first centuries, when thy children were put to death by thousands! Did God leave thee a widow? No, certainly not! Men and angels were struck

with astonishment at the sight of thy fecundity! The number of thy children increased by thousands, both in heaven and upon earth!

Let us invoke Jesus, the founder of Christianity, to bestow His divine grace upon us, that we may walk in His footsteps, all the days of our life, in order to be partakers of His glory in His eternal kingdom! Amen.

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No. III. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. The Catholic Church is the Church of God, out of which no one can be Saved, except excused by Invincible Ignorance.

“Careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism.”—St. Paul to the Eph. iv. 2, 3, 4.

What a beautiful lesson do these words contain for the followers of Jesus Christ! Did they all listen to it, we should not see, at this time, so many contending divisions; all would profess the same belief; all would be united in one body; all would enjoy the blessings of peace, friendship and brotherhood; all could then exclaim with exultation in the words of the prophet David: “Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”—Ps. cxxxii. 1.

May all Christians become united in one faith! May they all show by their union and friendship that they are the children of the same father! Why should so many yet continue divided in faith! Does not St. Paul teach us that our faith ought to be one, as God is one? Has not Jesus Christ instituted a church which is inspired by the Holy Ghost (John xvi, 13), which is “the *pillar and ground of truth*” (I Tim. iii. 5), in order to teach us *not opinions* but *doctrines* to be believed without danger of being deceived? Has he not declared that he who “believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned?”—Mark xvi. 16. Has he not given strict orders to His Apostles to “teach

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all nation to observe all things whatsoever” He commanded them, promising to be with them “all days, even to the consummation of the world?”—Matt. xxviii. 20.

Happy, therefore, those who listen to the Church of God, and firmly believe whatever she teaches, for after this life they shall receive the crown of immortal glory!

But how shall we be able to distinguish the Church of God among the divers societies of Christians; each one claiming to be that true Church? The Church of God is known from all others by the unity of its members in faith, in sacraments, in prayers and holy sacrifice, and in government. The other churches are divided in the very ground of their faith. Reflect upon this; pray God to enlighten your mind, and say to yourself: We are all condemned to die, and after death we shall be judged by a just God! It is a terrible thing for the guilty to fall into the hands of the living God! Then, examine which is the true Church of God, and you will hear within yourself a voice saying: Unite yourself to those who are united; turn away from those who are divided. That voice is the voice of reason—the voice of Holy Scriptures—the voice of tradition—hence, the voice of God Himself. Woe to him who shall despise that voice, for he shall have one day to stand before the tribunal of that great God, whose sentence of condemnation against him shall be irrevocable!

Reason teaches us that God, who is wisdom itself, could not establish a religion containing contradictory dogmas. How unreasonable would it be to maintain that God teaches contradictions to mankind, as for example, that Jesus Christ is God, and that He is not God; that baptism is necessary for salvation, and that it is not necessary for salvation; that Jesus Christ has given to His Apostles and successors the power of forgiving sins, and that He has not given them such power; that faith without good works is not sufficient for salvation, and that it is sufficient for salvation; that the pains of hell are to last forever, and that they are not to last forever, etc..

Would not the man who should assert that God is the 111 author of these contradictory propositions be guilty of a great crime? Would it not be the same as to say: God is a liar

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and the author of falsehood? Let those who have thought, said and written that all sects of Christian are equally agreeable to God, reflect seriously upon that subject. What! can truth and untruth be equally acceptable to God? Christians! our God is truth; He has taught us nothing but truth; and truth being one, our faith must be one.

That the Church of God ought to be one, is also proved by the Holy Scriptures: "I have other sheep," says our Saviour, "who are not of this fold; them also, I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."—John x. 16. He spoke in reference to the Gentiles, who were to be united with those Jews who believed in Him, to form His Church. And in the prayer He addressed to His Father for His Apostles and for all Christians, He uttered these words: "Not for them only do I pray, but for them also, who, through their words, shall believe in me; that they may be one, as thou Father in me and I in Thee that they may be also one in us."—John xvii. 20. 21. Read again the advice of St. Paul to the Ephesians, and reflect upon it: "Careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling. *One Lord, one faith, one baptism.*" These expressions are short, but full of energy, in order to impress upon their minds the necessity of unity. Do not forget them, He seems to say to the Ephesians: *One body and one spirit; one Lord, one faith, one baptism*, that is to say, one Church, the members of which must be united in the same spirit, and in the same faith. The same Apostle in his epistle to Titus says to him: "A man that is an heteric, after the first and second admonition, avoid; knowing that he that is such a one, is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgement."—Tit. iii. 10. And in his epistle to the Romans he commands them "to mark those who cause dissensions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and to avoid them."—Rom.xvi.17. And to the Galatians he declares that *quarrels*, dissensions and sects are sins excluding from the Kingdom of God.—Gal. v. 20. Hence, unity is an essential mark of the Church of God.

Let us now come to tradition; peruse the works of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church; they have been given to us, that we might not be children tossed about to and fro, and

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carried about with every wind of doctrine. They all speak with admiration of the unity of the Church.

Hear St. Ignatius, the martyr, a father of the first century: "He who corrupts," says he, "the faith of God, that for which Christ suffered, the same being defiled, shall go to unquenchable fire, as shall he who shall hear him."—Epist. ad Eph.

We learn also from St. Irenæus, a father of the second century, in his book against Heretics, "that the Church received her faith from the Apostles and their disciples, and that the same faith she delivers and teachers with one accord, as if gifted with one tongue."—*Adversus Hæreses*.

In the third century St. Cyprian, who wrote an entire book on the unity of the Church, thus expressed himself: "Whosoever is separated from the Church is joined to an adulteress, is cut off from the promises. He cannot have God for his father, who has not the Church for his mother."—*De unitate ecclesiæ*

St. John Chrysostom, who lived in the fourth century, speaks on the same subject, as follows: "We know that salvation belongs to the Church alone, and that no one can partake of Christ, or be saved out of the Catholic Church and faith."—*Homilia 1, in pase*.

Embraced in the foregoing citations, you have the faith of St. Clement, Hegesippus, Tertullian, Origen, St. Dionysius of Alexandria, Lactantius, Eusebius, St. Athanasius, St. Hilary, St. Basil, St. Jerome, St. Augustine and all the Doctors of the Church. Who, in spite of the testimony of tradition, of the Holy Scriptures and of reason, would dare to assert that *unity* is not an essential mark of the true Church of Christ?

But where shall we find that unity so essential to the true Church of God? We shall discover it in the Catholic Church, whose members, though spread over the whole surface of the earth, are all united in faith, in sacraments, in prayers, and holy sacrifice, and in government.

First. —The members of the Catholic Church are united in faith. In whatever part of the world you may go, you will find members of that Church, and if you interrogate them concerning their faith, or ask them to recite their creed, you may be sure that it will be the Apostles' creed, and not the creed of a particular man or sect. The Apostles' creed is the Catholic creed, and is known and recited every day by all the members of that Church. Hence, all believe in one God the Creator of Heaven and earth, who will reward the just, and punish the wicked. All believe that there are three Divine Persons in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. All believe that the Son of God was made man, and gave His life for the salvation of mankind; that He arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven; and that He will, at the last day, come with great power and majesty, to judge all men, according to their works. All believe that the just shall be crowned with an everlasting glory, and the wicked sent to everlasting torments. In fine, they believe whatever the Catholic Church believes and teaches, without fear of being deceived, trusting to the promise of Jesus Christ: "Behold I am with you all days; even to the consummation of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 20.

Convinced of the power the Church has been invested with by their Divine Master, they all proclaim that to her alone belongs the power of explaining the Divine Scriptures. They all agree in saying that he who does not observe all the commands of God and the Church cannot be saved, except he should be excusable on account of invincible ignorance. They all say with one voice, that there is no salvation for sinners, unless they repent from the bottom of their hearts, and repair as far as they can their evil ways towards God and their neighbor. They all believe, that whoever hears the Church, hears Jesus Christ Himself, and that whoever despises the Church despises Jesus Christ: "He that heareth you heareth me," says our Saviour, "and he that despises you despises me."—Luke x. 16. Nay, they believe that he who refuses to hear the Church is to be considered as heathen and publican according to these words of Jesus Christ: "And if he will not hear the Church let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican."—Matt, xviii, 17.

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Go to Spain, go to France, go to Italy or Germany. Go to Ireland or to England, to Asia or Africa, to North or South America; everywhere you will find members of the Catholic Church, and all united in their faith, all believing whatever the Catholic Church believes and teaches.

Secondly. —In sacraments. All the members of the Catholic Church have the same belief concerning the number and effects of the sacraments. Read their catechisms in whatever place you may go, in whatever language it may be, and you will see that they have seven sacraments, which have been established by Jesus Christ, as seven channels through which He pours His heavenly grace into the souls of those who receive them with good dispositions; Baptism to blot out original sin and also actual sins if we be guilty of any; to make us Christians, children of God and of His Church; Confirmation to render us strong in our faith by the reception of the Holy Ghost; Holy Eucharist to nourish our souls with the body and blood of Jesus Christ; Penance to forgive the sins committed after Baptism; Extreme Unction to give spiritual and even corporal relief to the sick; Holy Orders to confer the sacred powers of the priesthood, and the grace to perform in a holy manner the sacerdotal functions; Matrimony to sanctify the legitimate union of man and woman, and to give grace to the married couple to live in a Christian manner.

Thirdly. —In the Holy Sacrifice, in prayers and in other acts of religion. We do not raise altar against altar; we have an altar, on which we offer to God for the living and the dead the body and blood of Jesus Christ. In every part of the world there are priests of that altar; everywhere you will know them in the performance of their sacred functions; for, everywhere, when they offer the Holy Sacrifice, they read the same prayers, they use the same ceremonies and the same words. Who does not see that, in the Catholic Church alone, has been fulfilled that prediction of Malachias to the Jews: "I have no more pleasure among you, says the Lord 115 of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hands, for from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place, incense shall be offered to my name, and

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a clean offering.”—Malachias i. 10-11. Oh! how consoling it is for the members of the Catholic Church to join their prayers to those of her ministers, and to offer to God, through their hands, that divine holocaust, in order to acknowledge His supreme power over all creatures, to render thanks to Him, and to obtain new favors from His infinite bounty!

In our morning and evening devotions, we recite in our private houses the Lord's prayer, the Angelical Salutation, the Apostles' Creed and other prayers. We attend divine service every Sunday, and on other festival days prescribed by the Church. We abstain from flesh meat on Fridays and many other days throughout the year; we keep the Apostolic fast of Lent, and many other fast days. We confess our sins to our pastors, at least once a year, and after due preparation we receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ. “Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

Fourthly. —In government. What order! what regularity! what a beautiful aspect does that great body of the Church present in its unity! It may be compared to a great tree, the branches of which overshadow the whole surface of the earth. Jesus the invisible head of the Church has planted the tree and gives life to it, and will give life to it to the end of the world, according to His promise, or rather He is Himself the tree, as He has declared it in these terms: “I am the vine; you are the branches.”—John xv. 5. The Supreme Pontiff, the vicar of Jesus Christ, the visible head of the Church represents upon earth the trunk of the tree, the bishops represent the great branches, the priests the smaller branches, and the faithful the other branches. In fact, all the members of the Catholic Church, though composed of so many different nations and tribes, form but one body. All have the same spiritual chief, the Pope of Rome, the successor of St. Peter. From the birth of Christianity, the faithful have called him their father and spiritual chief; he alone has received the power of ruling over the entire flock. It was not in vain that Christ said to St. Peter, and in his person to his successors: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”—Matt. xxvi. 15. And in another place He said also to him: “Feed my lambs, feed my sheep.”—John xxi. That is to say, feed the whole flock. And again: “Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, shall be bound also in

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heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.”—Matt. xv. 18.

The Pope is the supreme head of the Church. The bishops are appointed by him to rule, each of them, over a particular portion of the universal flock. Every bishop ought to be obeyed in spiritual concerns by all the faithful of his diocese, ecclesiastics, religious and laymen, according to the words of St. Paul to the Hebrews: “Obey your prelates and be subject to them, for they watch as being to render an account of your souls.”—Heb. xiii. 17. And again in the same chapter: “Remember your prelates who have spoken to you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” The priests rank third in the hierarchy of the Church, and they are the spiritual fathers of the members of the different parishes entrusted to their care by their respective bishops.

All the members of the Catholic Church, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, are to be guided in religious and spiritual matters, by their pastors, diocesan bishop and the Pope. A priest must obey in spiritual matters his bishop and the Pope, and the bishops the Pope. Woe to him who shall refuse lawful obedience to his superior! Woe to him who shall despise the ministers of the Church, and cause scandal among his brethren; he shall be cut off as a dead member!

Read the history of the Catholic Church, or examine the Apostolical Tree, and you will see a multitude of different sects cut off from the tree of life for having refused to hear the Church speaking by the mouth of her ministers. Ask all the Heresiarchs and their followers why they have been separated from the Catholic Church, and you will learn what 117 has been from the beginning, the practice of that Church towards those who rebelled against her.

Ebion, Cerinthus, Valentinus, Marcion, and Carpocrates, why were you cut off from the true vine? History answers for them: We taught divers errors, we refused to hear the voice

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of the Church, and to abandon our new doctrines, and we were cut off from the true vine as dead branches.

Paul of Samosata, Sabellius, Novatus, Manes, why were you cut off from the true vine? History answers for them also: We taught doctrines unheard of before our own time, we despised the ancient Church and we were severed as dead branches from the heavenly vine.

Arians, Nestorians, Eutychiana, Pelagians, why were you cut off from the heavenly tree? History answers again: Because we would not hear the Church, and were too proud to submit to her decisions.

Iconoclasts, Greek schismatics, and all your imitators, why do you appear as dead branches dissevered from the tree of life? History answers yet once more: We would not listen to the voice of the Church, and we were excluded from the number of her children, for having made new creeds, or endeavored to change the order kept in her hierarchy.

Behold, now, whether error and schism can live in the Catholic Church; as soon as they appear they are rooted out by those who have been appointed by Jesus Christ to watch over his flock, to keep in its purity the deposit of faith, and to preserve peace and unity among her members. Hence truth and unity will always be found in the Catholic Church. Hence, the Catholic Church is the true Church of Christ and the heiress of all the promises.

We have proved that the true Church must essentially be one, and also that the Catholic Church has the essential mark of unity, because her members are united in faith, in sacraments, in holy sacrifice and prayers, and in government. We will now consider the unhappy fate of those who are or have been, in former ages, separated from the Catholic Church.

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At the birth of Christianity, certain heretics rejected the dogma of the resurrection. They were refuted by St. Paul. 118 Others taught that it was criminal to be concerned for the nourishment of the body, whilst many others did not consider themselves guilty even in abandoning themselves to every kind of sensual pleasures. In the second century Montanus was the chief of a numerous sect, of which many members professed that they were inspired to preach a new religion more perfect than that of Jesus Christ. Marcion condemned marriage, taught that the body was the production of the bad principle, and that Jesus Christ had taken only the appearance of a body. In the third century Paul of Samasota denied the divinity of Jesus Christ; Sabellius the distinction of persons in God, and Novatus the power of the Church to remit or forgive all sins. In the fourth century the Arians denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the Macedonians that of the Holy Ghost. All these sects, and a great number of others, down to the time of Luther, were divided among themselves and had no mark of unity. They all rebelled against the Catholic Church and were expelled from her communion.

Let us come to those of the *Great Reformation* . Have they been more happy than those of whom we have already spoken? I believe they have not. Were there not innumerable disputes, quarrels and disunion among the first leaders of the *Great Reformation* ? Was it not the case with Luther, Calvin, Henry VIII, and their followers? Did they not build creed upon creed? Did they not change them into new ones? Did they not at last find themselves like those who were building the tower of Babel, all in utter confusion, not understanding one another? Read Bossuet's history of the variations of the Protestants, and you shall be convinced of it.

Behold in our own days the unfortunate state of those who follow the footsteps of the *first Reformers* , in refusing to hear the Catholic Church! Though divided into numerous sects, believing contradictory dogmas, yet every one of them proclaim itself to be the Church of God. They generally argue as follow: Our rule of faith is the Bible, the Bible is the word of God; therefore, our religion, which is founded on the word of God, is true. Great is their

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mistake; first, because everything prescribed by the Christian religion is 119 not contained in the Bible; it is solemnly declared in the Holy Scriptures that Apostolical traditions ought to be believed; St. Paul in his epistle to the Thessalonians says to them: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle"—Ep. II., ch. ii. ver. 14. Secondly, because the Holy Scriptures on many points of doctrine are obscure. Reflect on these words of St. Peter, who, speaking of the epistles of St. Paul, says that they contain "some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own perdition."—II Ep. of St. Peter ii, 16. "You, therefore, brethren, knowing those things before, take heed," says the same Apostle, "lest being led aside by the error of the unwise, you fall from your own steadfastness.—Ep. II., ch. ii. ver. 17.

Who, then, ought to explain the meaning of the Bible? Some of them answer: We are directed by the Holy Ghost, and we cannot be deceived. But if so, why so many contradictions in the explanation of it? The Holy Ghost, being truth itself, cannot preach contradictory propositions. The others, denying such assistance of the Holy Ghost, say that every reasonable man, guided by the light of his reason, can explain it for himself. Behold the principle! What are the consequences of it? Innumerable errors, innumerable sects,—almost the destruction of Christianity. Why so? Because the *yes* and the *no* are taught in almost every point of doctrine, because what is believed to-day, will be sometimes disbelieved to-morrow, as is proved by the experience of many centuries. What then does Christianity become, but mere opinions, which every one may change, according to his own idea, according to his judgment?

Hence, though using the same Bible as the text book of their religion, the most learned men among them are divided in the most essential points of doctrine, to-wit: on the divinity of Jesus Christ, on the mystery of the trinity of persons in God, on the eternal punishment of unrepenting sinners, on the necessity of baptism for salvation, on the validity of infant baptism, on the necessity of faith and good works for salvation, on the lawfulness of

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marriage, on the 120 necessity of keeping Apostolical succession in the Church of Christ, etc., etc.

Where can be found among them the mark of *unity* so essential to the true Church of Christ? Where can be found that *one flock* of our Savior under *one Shepherd*? —John x. 16. Where the fulfillment of His prayer to His Father, for the union of all those who would believe in Him?—John xvii. 20, 21. Where one body, one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism?—Eph. iv. 2-3-4. Where discover among them that Church which is the *pillar and ground of truth*? —I Ep. to Tim. iii. 15. Where among them, the accomplishment of our Savior's promise to be with His Church, *all days, even to the consummation of the world*. Where, among them, the light, the influences of the Holy Ghost, of the Spirit of truth, who, according to the promise of Jesus, will teach His Church all truth?—John xvi. 13.

All these promises have been realized in the Catholic Church alone, the true spouse of Jesus, as we have already proved. And among our separated brethren, have been realized dissensions, quarrels, divisions and also pamphlets and books in which the Catholic Church and her ministers are attacked, calumniated and despised; as in a pamphlet which, the other day,* was presented to us by a French Catholic, at the moment when it was to be cast into the fire. It had been bestowed upon him by a Rev. gentleman of a Protestant sect. In that pamphlet, among many scornful things against the Catholic Church, we read that she makes a *God of the priest*, and that she accepts in the place of virtues, *fasts, penances and money*.

* A. D. 1348, See No. XI, page 52.

If the most learned men among them are so much divided, what shall the ignorant do?

What shall, even those learned men answer to the infidels reproaching them, on account of their so numerous divisions and sects, that the Bible is for them the apple of discord?

Could Pagans, applying to them for instructions on the religions of Jesus Christ, be induced to embrace it, were they informed to their numerous dissensions, sects and variations? Would they not be scandalized?

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Whoever will reflect on the unity of members of the Catholic Church in faith, in sacraments, in prayers and holy sacrifice, and in government; and on the disunion, dissensions and variations of those who are or have been separated from the Catholic Church, will be convinced that she alone is the heiress of all the promises of the Son of God, the Saviour of mankind.

Happy, therefore, they who listen to the voice of the Catholic Church, who believe all her doctrines, who observe all her precepts, who are fed with the sacraments of her divine spouse, who cherish her and are disposed to give up their life, rather than sadden her motherly heart; for they are the true children of God, and a most beautiful crown shall be bestowed upon them in heaven! Unhappy they who are separated from the Catholic Church, for, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, their minds will find no space in this life; and were not many of them, in their separation from the true spouse of Jesus Christ, excusable on account of *invincible ignorance*, they would all be sentenced to eternal punishment by the supreme judge of mankind! Let us, Catholics, pray for them, that they may return to the true flock of Jesus Christ! They are our fellowmen. We are all born of the same father. For them as for us, Jesus died upon the cross. Let us with fervor, beseech and Divine Mercy, that they may all come back to the Catholic Church, their true mother!

May God grant us such a favor! Then, full of consolation and joy, we will all together render thanks to Him, and repeat with exultation these words of the prophet: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Amen.

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No. IV. MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS. Greatness, Power, and Bounty of Mary—the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of God, because Jesus is God—Hence our Veneration and Love for Her who is Styled by the Church of God “Refuge of Sinners.”

“My soul doth magnify the Lord: And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Because he that is mighty hath done great things to me.”—Luke i. 46, 47, 48.

The Blessed Virgin Mary having received the most incomprehensible favors from the Omnipotent praised His bounty, and rejoiced in God her Saviour, who had considered with pleasure her humility; and enlightened by the Holy Ghost she foresaw that all generations should call her blessed, because the Almighty had done wonderful things to her.

O see how good is the Lord, and how admirable are His ways! She was unknown to the great ones of the world. She was spending her days in prayer and meditation, she esteemed herself as one of the most abject among the daughters of Israel, and her profound humility induced her Creator to pour into her soul immense treasures of grace, and to exalt her more and more above all His most perfect creatures.

Let us consider some of the special favors bestowed upon her.

You all know it; from the moment of the fall of our 123 first parents till Mary came into the world no one upon earth had always been free from the stain of sin; not one into whom the infernal serpent had not breathed his pestiferous poison; not one whose heart had not been at least for some time the slave of the enemy of our race. But as soon as Mary, the Morning Star, that was to precede the long expected Sun of Justice, was conceived, God Fixed with complacency His eyes upon her. For, from that very moment of her conception, *she was the perfect one* of whom he had said, long before, by one of His inspired writers: “Thou art all fair, O my love; and there is not a spot in thee.”—Cant.iv.7. God was pleased

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to contemplate the beauty of that vessel of election, by Him announced immediately after the sin of Adam, as the one who should crush the head of the infernal serpent. Remember His words to the enemy of mankind: "Because thou hast done this thing, I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. She shall crush thy head."—Genesis iii. 14. He was pleased to admire in her the master-piece of his works, the holy virgin whom He had promised by the mouth of Isaías in this most solemn manner: "Hear ye, therefore, O house of David. *** Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel"—Isaías vii. 13, which, being interpreted, means God with us.

Yes, God was pleased and delighted in contemplating the beauty of His most beloved daughter, whom He had preserved from original sin, whom He had enriched with His most precious gifts, at the very moment of her conception, whom, on account of her perfect faithfulness in accomplishing His divine will, He had, from day to day, replenished more and more with those extraordinary graces fit to adorn the soul of her who was to become the mother of His son.

Every thing being ready for the redemption of the world, the spotless virgin of Israel ought to be informed of the great mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, and of the happy creature who has been chosen to be His mother.

Who shall be the heavenly messenger sent to her? One of the greatest princes of the celestial court receives the commission; 124 the Archangel Gabriel shall present himself before her with the most respect and deliver to her God's message.

Hear him and understand by his conduct and words the blindness of those who are almost scandalized at the homage we pay to her; to her whom an Archangel salutes with so much respect and veneration; to her on whom God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost bestow all the riches of their love; and learn how much she is to be honored, cherished and loved by us, poor mortals, who are so inferior to the Angels, and mere nothings, when

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compared with God! These are the words of the heavenly messenger to Mary: "Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women." She is troubled, but the angel says to her: "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God: Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth great, and shalt be called the Son of the Most High. ** The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: And, therefore, also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. ** And Mary said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word." And the angel departed from her.—Luke i. And the Son of God, by whom everything has been created, *was made flesh* in the womb of the spotless virgin of Israel. Behold the incomprehensible grandeur of Mary! She is the Mother of Jesus! She is the Mother of God, for Jesus is God!

Who will now dare to tell me that there is not much difference between the grandeur of Mary and that of many other holy women? I will ask him; where find a creature equal to her; to her whom the Most High overshadows with His divine essence, whom God the Son selects for His mother, on whom rests the Holy Ghost for the accomplishment of the mystery of the *Incarnation*. Great before God are the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Martyrs, the Anchores, the Holy Virgins; greater are His Angels, but even among the Angels of the first hierarchy, 125 who could be compared to Mary, the beloved daughter of the Eternal Father, the Mother of His Son, the Spouse of the Holy Ghost? What human tongue could praise enough her, whom the Holy Trinity has exalted in so wonderful a manner?

O, let us then proclaim it everywhere: *He that is mighty hath done great things to her*, and all generations shall call her blessed! Behold John the Baptist, yet in the womb of his mother, leaping for joy at the sound of her voice, and St. Elizabeth, his mother, being filled with the Holy Ghost, crying out: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is it to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?—

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Luke i. O truly, He that is mighty has done great things to Mary and all generations shall call her blessed!

Yes, O Mary, Mother of God, He that is mighty has done wonderful things to thee, and we shall call the blessed from generation to generation, till the end of the world! John the Baptist, yet in the womb of his mother, leaped for joy at the sound of thy voice, and our hearts will be delighted when we shall hear the favors granted to thee by the Almighty; when we shall praise thy name for the innumerable benefits received from the Lord through thy intercession; and when overwhelmed with grief, we shall have recourse to thy powerful mediation at the throne of grace!

The Blessed Virgin Mary is very powerful by her prayers in heaven. She is very kind towards us poor exiles in this vale of tears: we must then often have recourse to her intercession.

We shall become convinced of the great power of Mary in heaven, if we consider how great is the goodness of God towards His faithful servants even upon earth. Innumerable favors have been granted to their prayers.

Moses addressed his supplication to God for the people of Israel, guilty of the crime of idolatry, and God, though much irritated by such a crime, was appeased. Job prayed for his friends against whom the wrath of God was kindled, and God forgave them. Remark the words of God to the 126 friends of Job, invoking His divine mercy: "Go to my servant Job, and offer for yourselves a holocaust; and my servant Job shall pray for you; his face I will accept, that folly be not imputed to you."—Job xlii. Elias, the prophet, invoked the help of the Lord for a mother who had lost a beloved child, and the child was restored to life. The prayers of Elisæus had the same effect for another mother. Nay, when a dead man was laid in the sepulchre of Elisæus no sooner did he touch the bones of the prophet, than he revived and stood upon his feet.—Kings, Book IV, xii 21. Disease departed from the sick, when they touched the garments of St. Paul.—Act, xix. 12—or were covered with the

shadow of St. Peter. The Holy Scriptures and lives of the saints are full of innumerable favors granted through their prayers. At their intercession the sick were healed, the dead restored to life, the most hardened sinners converted, and the elements were obedient to their voice. Such were the miracles they wrought when upon earth; nor did death diminish either their power or charity after having been received into the kingdom of God; both were increased in heaven. Listen to these words of Jesus Christ: "He that shall overcome and keep my words to the end, to him I will give power over the nations."—Apoc. ii. 26. And in another place He adds: "I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just, who need not penance."—Luke xv. 7. Hence, they pray for us in heaven, according to these words of St. John: "The four living creatures, and the four and twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odor, which are the prayers of the Saints."—Apoc. v. 8. Hence, the Church of Christ, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, tells us that the saints in heaven can help us by their intercession. Who, then, can doubt of it without destroying the foundation of Christianity? Luther himself believed in the doctrine of the invocation of the saints: "I allow," says he, "with the whole church and believe that the saints in heaven should be invoked. For who can contradict the miracles wrought daily at their tombs?"— *De Purg. quorum articulorum*.

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God is pleased to grant favors to His faithful servants, but He is more or less inclined to accomplished the prayers of every one of them according to his merits and elevation in the order of grace. Hence, what can He refuse to Mary, the most perfect of His creatures? What can He refuse to her, who by a special benefit of His bounty was conceived without sin, spent all the days of her life in the practice of all virtues, never committed the smallest fault, and died ornamented with the splendor of His most precious gifts? What can He refuse to her, whom He has placed above all the Saints and Angels; to her who He has established queen of heaven; to her who is the Mother of Jesus.

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What can be refused to thee, O Mary, Mother of God? Jesus is the fruit of thy womb; His flesh has been formed of thy flesh; thou hast nourished Him with the milk of thy breast; thou hast watched over Him in His infancy with so much eagerness; thou hast loved Him above conception! What shall be denied thee who can call Jesus thy Son, and who may received from Him, what the best of mothers may hope from the best of sons?

And did not Jesus show Himself the best of sons towards Mary, during His mortal life? Open the Holy Scriptures, and you will find that He was obedient to her, and that, at her request, He changed water into wine, at the wedding in Cana, even before His time to work miracles had come. Were the Scriptures silent upon that subject, who would think that Jesus had not for Mary, His mother, that tender love which induces a good son to accomplish with eagerness and joy the wishes of His mother? Jesus, who, to redeem guilty man, would be sold like a slave, carried from tribunal to tribunal, mocked as a senseless king; Jesus, who, to save mankind oppressed with crimes, was pleased to be scourged at the pillar, crowned with thorns and nailed to a cross on which He expired could that kind Jesus refuse any favor to His kind mother?

But if Jesus granted the requests of His mother, when she was upon earth, is He less disposed in her favor, now when she enjoys in heaven the reward due to her merits? Far from us a thought injurious both to the bounty of the 128 Son and to the merits of His mother! Hence many fathers of the Church do not fear to proclaim, that, though Mary be infinitely inferior to her Son by nature, she possesses, in some manner, by grace, all the power of her bountiful Son.

Now examine and understand what the power of Mary is in heaven? No mortal is able to give a right idea of it. Should some of the blessed spirits, who surround the throne of God, come upon earth to make us know the power and glory of Mary in heaven, they would say to us: "It is impossible to make you understand all the glory and power of the elect in the kingdom of God. The reward granted to them even for a glass of water given to the poor for the love of Jesus, is more precious than all the goods of the earth. Let no one

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among you endeavor to comprehend the extent of the glory and power of the mother of Jesus. God, according to His promise to Abraham, the father of the true believers, is the reward of all the elect, but He communicates Himself in a special manner to Mary, the mother of Jesus, the most pure, the most holy, the most perfect of His creatures. Jesus alone knows the extent of His power, Jesus alone knows the extent of the power of His most beloved mother.” Those Angels, messengers of God, would also say to us: “Were the heavens opened, you would see Mary, the queen of all the Saints and Angels, sitting on a throne of glory, next to Jesus, clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of stars.—Apoc. xii. 1. You could bear Jesus encouraging the wishes of His mother by the following words: O mother, whom I so tenderly love and cherish, rejoice, the time of tribulation is over; ask whatever you wish, and all your desires shall be accomplished! Ask, I am the Almighty, I am your Son, the God of all mercy, always ready to comply with all your requests! Ask, I have not forgotten that you bore me nine months in your womb; that you nourished me with the milk of your breast; that by the work of your hands you procured to me the necessities of life! Ask, I shall never forget your anxiety for me in the stable of Bethlehem, nor your flight into Egypt to save my life from the hands of cruel Herod, nor the sword of sorrow which pierced your heart at the prediction of my sufferings 129 by holy Simeon, nor the chalice of bitterness you had to drink to the last drop on Mount Calvary, at the sight of my body covered with wounds, hanging on the cross and all bleeding; ask, O Mother, and nothing shall be refused to your desires!”

That this is the language of Jesus to Mary, His mother, is beyond doubt. Read with attention and reflection in the Holy Scriptures the promise of God to His faithful servants and you will be fully convinced of it.

Hence, Mary is all-powerful by her prayers to her Son; and being our mother she wishes to help us. Let us, then, have recourse to her, and she will do for us what Job did for his friends.

I say that Mary is our mother, because she gave birth to Jesus the redeemer of our souls, because Jesus gave her to us before rendering up the ghost, when He said to St. John: *Behold thy Mother!* The Doctors of the Church tell us that St. John was then the representative of Christians. Mary is also our mother, because she proved to be the best of mothers for us on Mount Calvary, by offering to God the sacrifice of her Son for the salvation of the world. Mary followed Jesus to Mount Calvary, she stood at the foot of the cross. She beheld her most beloved Son nailed to it. She saw His head crowned with thorns, His hands and feet pierced with rough nails, His blood running in streams. She saw His whole body covered with bruises and wounds. She heard the ferocious cries of His enemies mocking, reviling, insulting Him with the most outrageous blasphemies. She heard her most beloved Son, amid the most excruciating tortures, cry out unto His Father with a most plaintive voice: My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? She saw all, she heard all! Oh, what sadness, what grief then overwhelmed thy soul, O Mary, most tender of mothers! What sufferings can be compared to thy sufferings in beholding thy Son so cruelly treated by His enemies! Thy Son, whom thou knewest to be the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the maker of the universe! If, at His death the angels wept, the sun was darkened, the dead came forth from the tombs, and rocks were split, what shall I say of the sea of sorrow into which thy soul was plunged, O queen of martyrs!

Great, indeed, was the love of Mary for us on Mount Calvary! Her heart, though rent with grief at the sight of her bleeding Son, was inflamed with charity for the salvation of our souls. We may represent to ourselves that most sorrowful of mothers, uniting her prayers to those of her Son, and invoking the mercy of God for mankind as follows: "Great and good God, look down upon my beloved Son! Behold Him all bleeding, His face all disfigured, His hands and feet pierced! Accept His blood and life as the price of the redemption of the world! Forgive sinners, they do not know what they do!" O inexpressive charity of the mother of Jesus for men!

Should any one doubt that these were then the sentiments of her heart for us, let him bear in mind that Mary, being the most perfect of all creatures, had nothing so much at heart as the redemption of mankind, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of our souls. She knew by the Holy Scriptures, by the prediction of holy Simeon, by the discourses of Jesus, that the sacrifice required for that effect was the death of her beloved Son; and she, wishing nothing but the accomplishment of the will of God, no doubt, offered Him for the expiation of our sins, not only at the foot of the cross, but many times during the course of His life.

Yes, Mary is our mother! Let us often have recourse to her powerful intercession, and show that we are her children by imitating her virtues. O, happy they who, desiring to walk in her footsteps, use every endeavor to observe the commands of God and of His Church! In all their troubles and temptations let them have recourse to Mary, and divine assistance will be afforded to them. If, at times, our requests are not immediately granted, let us think that Mary wishes to try our faithfulness, and procure for us greater glory in heaven.

We read in the life of St. Francis of Sales, that the devil troubled his mind with thoughts of despair. The temptation was violent, he thought that God had rejected him for ever. What a torment to a soul breathing only for heaven! 131 He had recourse to Mary, he invoked the mother of the afflicted, but he received no comfort. The temptation grew stronger, and he continued to address his fervent prayers to her, that she would intercede in his behalf; and yet no relief in his affliction. At last his soul fell into profound sadness, and even his life was endangered. What will he do? Whither will he go? He will continue to invoke Mary, he will hope in her assistance against all appearance of hope. In fine, having been long tried, on a certain day, when addressing his request to her with an abundance of tears, he was suddenly comforted, and peace and joy succeeded to his profound sadness.

Have confidence then in the protection of Mary, and she will defend you against all your spiritual enemies. Ask her intercession, and by her prayers to her Son she will relieve you from all your evils, or, at least, she will obtain grace for you to support them with patience

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and resignation, a favor more precious before God and His angels, than to be delivered from them all.

Let us, as did the friends of Job, consider ourselves guilty before God, and have recourse to Mary, as they had recourse to Job. Her clemency extends over all those who invoke her holy name; even the greatest sinners are not rejected when they address themselves to her with humility and confidence. O, how many unfortunate sinners after having implored the assistance of Mary, received strength from heaven to break the chains of their shameful passions! How many hardened sinners, after having invoked her intercession, wept bitterly over the sins of a long life! How many troubled with the thoughts of despair, after having addressed their prayers to that good mother, recovered their peace of mind and a great hope of salvation! It is not in vain that she is called by the Church, *Refugee of Sinners*.

The Blessed Virgin Mary loves all sinners because she is their mother, and a mother does not cease to be a mother, though her son has been guilty of many crimes. What mother would refuse, however guilty her son might be, to speak in his favor, to save his life? But if we believe that a mother could not be insensible to the unhappy fate of her 132 son, who could think that Mary could despise the prayers of poor sinners who implore her assistance. Are they not her children? Or, is their fate large worthy of compassion than the fate of him who is in danger of being sentenced to death? O, how light are all the torments inflicted by men, when compared with those prepared for unrepenting sinners! No; Mary never refused to hear the prayers of the most abandoned sinners when they addressed themselves to her with confidence and humility! This is the belief everywhere proclaimed by the faithful, in the recitation of the prayer of St. Bernard to Mary, which begins as follows: "Remember, O most pious Virgin Mary, that no one ever had recourse to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy mediation, without obtaining relief."

Hence, the Church of God invites all the faithful often to have recourse to Mary in all their tribulations. Hence, so many titles given to her, so many monuments erected to her honor

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in all parts of the world. In one place she is invoked, in a special manner, under the title of Our Lady of Good Hope; in another, under that of Refuge of Sinners; in another, under that of Help of Christians; here under that of Mother of Our Redeemer; there under that of Queen of all the Saints; elsewhere you see magnificent statues and paintings which represent the Immaculate Virgin crushing under her feet the head of the infernal serpent; and everywhere she is saluted as the Mother of God, who can help us at all times, and in all circumstances.

If we ask the Church of God why so many titles are bestowed upon her, why so many monuments are erected to her glory, she will answer us by the mouth of her Saints, Doctors and Councils: Mary is the mother of Jesus; Mary is the mother of God, for Jesus is god; Mary is all powerful by her prayers to God; she is full of love towards us poor exiles in this vale of tears; we ought, then, to praise her name and render homage to her grandeur, power and bounty.

If you ask me the names of some of the Saints and Doctors, who have lavished so many praises on Mary the mother of Jesus, I will tell you to remember the immortal 133 names of Irennæus, Jerome, Basil, Chrysostom and Augustine; each of them a light that shone with great splendor in the first centuries of Christianity. But the expressions of praise towards her, uttered in the council of Ephesus (A. D. 431), by St. Cyril of Alexandria, with the universal applause of all the fathers of the council, will yet be a stronger proof of the belief of the Christian world in the first part of the fifth century of the Church. Listen to these his words which we find inserted in the acts of the council: We hail thee, *** Mother and Virgin, *** venerable treasure of the whole world, inextinguishable lamp, *** Mother of God, *** through whom the Holy Trinity is glorified adored, *** through whom angels and archangels rejoice, through whom the devils are put to flight, *** through whom the dead are raised to life, through whom the only begotten Son of God has shone upon those were seated in darkness, and in the shadow of death.”

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Such was the belief and confidence of the Church over fourteen hundred years ago; such is now belief and confidence towards that good mother, and to be convinced of it, it will be sufficient to reflect on these invocations addressed to her everywhere by that same Church, whose guide is the Holy Ghosts "Hail O queen, O mother of mercy! Our life, our consolation, and our hope! We the banished children of Eve cry out unto thee; to these we send up our sights, morning and weeping in this vale of tears. O thou our advocate, cast upon us thy pitying eyes! And after this our banishment, show us Jesus, the blessed fruit of thy womb; O merciful, O sweet Virgin Mary!" And again: "We fly to the patronage, O holy Mother of God, despise not our petitions, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin!" But the daily invocation of all the faithful to Mary is the Angelical Salutation, to which the church has added these words: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us, sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

From the beginning of the Christianity, without interruption, down to our time, the Church has always invoked Mary with the same confidence. Hence, whoever will speak to you against the practice of addressing your supplication to her, let him be to you as a heathen and a publican, because he refuses to hear the Church of God, *the pillar and ground of truth*, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

Let us rejoice in the Lord, who, in His infinite bounty has given us a mother so good and so powerful! Let us know how to make use of the gifts of heaven! Thus, are we troubled with violent temptations? Let us have recourse to Mary, and she will render useless all the efforts of our spiritual enemies. Are we attacked by calumny? Are we betrayed by our friends? Are we abandoned by all men? Is the whole world against us? Let us raise up our eyes to Mary, and she will pour into our hearts the balm of consolation. Are we in prosperity? Let us implore the protection of Mary, that the poisoned breath of pride may not penetrate into our souls. Are we in joy? Let us address our prayers to Mary, that our joy may not lead us into sin, and from sin into everlasting punishment. Just men and sinners, whoever we may be, let us invoke her intercession. If we are just, let us pray her

to keep our souls undefiled by removing from us the snares of the devil, and obtain for us the grace of a good death. But, if we are sinners, let us say to her: O Refuge of Sinners, help us by thy powerful intercession at the throne of mercy! Do not permit that we remain any longer in the slavery of the devil! O pray for us now and at the hour of our death!" Amen.

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No. V. THE ANGELS OF GOD. The Angels of God are very Powerful—God has given them Charge over us to Protect us—They are our Friends and Love us—We are the Children of the same Father and are Destined by the Mercy of God to be their Companions forever in Heaven.

Bless the Lord, all ye His angels.—Ps. cll. 20.

David, meditating on the infinite bounty of God, blessed His holy name with all the powers of his soul. Unable, however, to praise Him enough to satisfy the ardor of his love for Him, he cries unto the angels: "Bless the Lord, all ye His angels; you that are mighty in strength, and execute His word, hearkening to the voice of His orders. Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts; you His ministers, who do His will." Inspired by the Holy Ghost, David knew that millions of holy angels surround the throne of God in heaven, contemplate His perfections, and full of joy cease not to render homage to Him, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts, all the earth is full of Thy glory."—Apoc. iv. 10. And he entreated them to praise and bless Him more and more, to supply his own deficiency.

Let us, as David, often reflect on the benefits of the Lord; let us bless Him with all the strength of our minds and hearts, and pray the good angels to unite their praises with ours, that they may be more acceptable to Him. They will listen to our request with pleasure; nay, they will obtain for us spiritual and temporal favors at the throne of mercy. Let us bear in mind that they are our friends and brothers; 136 that we are the children of the same father, destined to be their associates and companions in heaven forever; and that they

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have been appointed by our common creator to be our protectors and guardians. “Are they not all,” says St. Paul, “ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?”—Heb. i. 14.

Sursum corda! In heaven we have friends, good and powerful friends, who see the face of God and love us, watching over us, always ready to help us in our trials, and defend us against all our enemies. We are under their custody by a special command of our merciful God. Ponder, and commit to your memory these words of the royal prophet, which the priests of the Church read *every day* in the divine office: “He hath given His angels charge over thee; to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up; lest thou dash thy foot against a stone; thou shalt walk upon the asp, and the basilisk, and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon.”—Ps. xc. 11-12.

We live in a world full of darkness, covered with the snares of our enemies, who are enflamed with wrath against us. St. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, gives us a strong warning when he exclaims: “Woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, knowing that he hath but a short time.”—Apoc. 12. St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, admonishes us as follows: Be sober and watch, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour.”—I of St. Peter, v. 8.—And St. Paul calls them “principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spirits of wickedness.”—Ephes. vi. 12. To understand yet better the malice, deceits and power of our spiritual enemies, remember the fall of our first parents in the earthly paradise; remember all the evils they heaped upon holy Job, and the temptation of Jesus Christ in the desert by the devil! We are surrounded with dangers threatening our salvation.

Sursum corda! Our good God, moved with compassion towards us, poor sinners, has given His angels charge to watch over us. If we invoke them and are docile to their suggestions, they will protect us, and we shall trample under 137 foot the infernal serpent, the lion, the dragon, and all their associates.

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Hear again the voice of God: "Behold, I will send my angel, who shall go before thee in they journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared. Take notice of him and hear his voice, and do not think him one to be contemned: for he will not forgive, when thou hast sinned, and my name is in him. But if thou wilt hear his voice, and do all that I speak, I will be an enemy to thy enemies and afflict them that afflict thee."—Exod. xxiii. 20. Interpreting this passage of holy writ as it has generally been done by Christian writers, I ought to render thanks to God and say: O infinite charity of our Lord, who so tenderly loves us his children, that he has placed us under the guardianship of His angels, who will discover to us the snares of our enemies, who will encourage us to do good, and to abstain from evil, who will reprove us even for our small sins, exciting in us remorse and contribution. The name of God is in them; and they are burning with the desire of seeing that holy name honored, praised, and glorified everywhere. They will often speak to us of the obedience to the infinite majesty of God; let us listen to their suggestion, and they will be our friends, and the Lord Himself will afflict them that will afflict us and bring us to the place of eternal rest, after we shall have been tried by many tribulations—I say after many tribulations, for the just man himself, though the friend of God and His angels, will be subject to many temptations, trials and sufferings before receiving the crown of eternal glory. Let us not forget it and that thought will give us strength in time of need.

Tobias was a good and holy man, loving God with his whole heart and his neighbour as himself. Who has not heard of his charity to the Israelities, when captive in Assyria—how many times he left his dinner to hide the dead in his home by day, and bury them by night at the risk of his life; how many of his people, the Israelites, were preserved from despair and the loss of their faith by his words and example; how he could let go all he had into the hands of the poor and unfortunate. He was really a just, charitable and holy man, admired by God and His angels. He ought, 138 then, to be tried by very great afflictions. Once, after burying the dead, being much fatigued, he fell asleep close to the walls of his house, and lost his eyesight. Tobias being blind, became very poor; his kinsmen and even his wife, far from consoling him, reproached him for his good works and his confidence

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in God. But the holy man, always patient and resigned to the will of the Lord, continues to give them good advice, and invoke with tears the assistance of heaven. *** Glory to God, all his tribulations will soon have an end!—Raphael, he archangel, has brought to the Lord his prayers and good works, and they have been accepted. The old and holy man shall yet enjoy many happy days before his death. Mockery and insult shall cease, and praises shall be bestowed upon him for his wisdom, charity and confidence in God. *** Behold Raphael, the messenger of God, comes again upon earth, he transforms himself into a beautiful young man, to be the guide of Tobias's son in his long journey. You know from your childhood how he preserved him from being devoured by a monstrous fish; how he delivered his wife from the devil; how he restored sight to his father, and brought joy and happiness to the whole family. Full of gratitude for his most important services, they request him to accept presents before his departure. But the beautiful young man making himself known to Tobias, said to him: "When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner, and hide the dead by day in the house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayer to the Lord. And now the Lord hath sent me to heal thee, and to deliver Sara, thy son's wife from the devil. For I am Raphael, one of the seven, who stand before the Lord. *** It is time, therefore, that I return to Him that sent me, but bless ye God, and publish all his wonderful works".—Tobias xii. 12-13-14

The angels of God are our friends, our guardians, our defenders. The Holy Scripture furnishes illustrations without number of this subject, but I will mention only a few of them.

Who saved Lot and his family from the conflagration of 139 Sodom? Two angels.—Gen. xix. Who Stayed Abraham's sword raised to sacrifice his only and beloved son? The voice of an angel.—Gen. xxii. Who, in order to deliver the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage, slew, in one night, all the first born in the land of Egypt? An angel of the Lord.—Exod. xii. Who saved Jerusalem and its inhabitants from the army of Sennacherib, numbering one hundred and eighty-five thousand men? An angel, sent from heaven, destroyed it in one night.—IV Kings xix. 35.

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And again, if the three young Israelites cast into the fiery furnace were not touched by the flames, but felt happy and joyful—Dan. iii. 49; if Daniel in the lion's den was respected by the ferocious animals—Dan. vi. 22; if Heliodorus, having entered the temple of Jerusalem to rob the treasury, was forced to implore the High Priest's intercession to save his life—11, Mach. iii., were not all these wonders the works of charitable angels?

By the ministry of angels the incarnation of the Son of God was announced to Mary—Luke i.; St. Joseph was consoled and comforted in his fears, troubles and afflictions—Matt. i. 20-11-13-19; St. Peter saws his chains broken—Acts xii. 7-8-9; and the other Apostles were delivered from their dungeon.—Acts v. 19. By the ministry of angels Christ was assisted, after his temptation by the devil in the desert—Matt. iv. 11, and strengthened in his agony—Luke xxii. 43; and the holy women, at the sepulchre, were informed of His glorious resurrection—Luke xxiv.—John xx. And on the last day, when the Son of man shall come with great power and majesty, “He shall send His angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather together His elect.”—Matt. xxiv. 30-31. “Are they not all ministering spirits sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?”

In heaven the angels contemplate God, who is charity, to whom they owe all their glory and happiness; they adore Jesus Christ with the respect due to the Son of God made man, and crucified by an excess of love for us, poor sinners. They see the thrones left vacant by the expulsion of the apostate angels, and they know that they are to be occupied by 140 men redeemed with the blood of Jesus Christ, who will unite forever with them in glorifying God, and singing His praises. Thus, they ardently desire our salvation, and rejoice when sent to us with the blessings of heaven. They come down to us with the favors of the Lord, and return to Him with our prayers and good works, to obtain for us new succors.

We read in Holy Writ that Jacob in his sleep had a heavenly vision, in which he saw a ladder upon the earth, the top thereof touching heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending by it.—Gen. xviii. 22. Is not this coming down and going up of the angels

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a manifestation of the continual services they render to men who fear God and love Him? Remember all the favors Tobias received from Raphael, the archangel. Our Savior Himself, when upon earth, was pleased to be attended by the angels; in His conversation with Nathanael, He said to him: "Amen, amen, I say to you, you shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.—John i. 51. Another interesting illustration: When the king of Syria had sent, by night, horses, chariots, and the strength of an army to beset Dothan, in order to have Elyseus the prophet taken, and brought to him early in the morning, Elyseus' servant saw the army around the city, was very much frightened, and went to him, crying out: "Alas, alas, alas, my Lord, what shall we do?" Elyseus prayed to God to open the eyes of his servant, and he saw: "And behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elyseus."—IV Kings, vi. O, how many times we have escaped imminent dangers for our souls and bodies, as also for other temporal concerns, by the assistance of these invisible and charitable friends, though we have been, perhaps, totally ignorant of their good services to us!

The angels of God are our friends and our brothers, and we are destined to be their immortal companions in heaven. Who could, then, describe the joy which they felt at the birth of the Son of God, made man, born in the stable of Bethlehem, taking upon Himself the punishment due to our sins, destroying the wall of separation between God and man, between heaven and earth, and ready to impart to us the 141 title and rank of sons of God, and heirs of His eternal kingdom? First, behold them all, those millions of millions of powerful and most intelligent spirits, rapt in admiration and amazement, adoring the child of the crib, joyfully complying with the will of the Eternal Father, who, speaking of His beloved Son appearing in this world, had said: "Let all the angles of God adore Him." Now the gates of heaven are thrown open, and they come down to announce to us that we have a Savior, a Redeemer. See one of them surrounded with the brightness of God, coming down to the poor shepherds; these are frightened by His splendor; but the angel said to them: Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all

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the people; for this day is born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. * * And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will,"—Luke iii. As if they would say to all the children of Adam: The war between heaven and earth is over; we bring you the tidings of an eternal peace, of an eternal felicity; rejoice, be men of good will, and you shall be partakers of our eternal glory and happiness. We all praise and sing in heaven the infinite mercy and love of the Lord for you, and we invite you all to join with us in thanksgiving to Him, repeating again: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will." These heavenly words the Church of God does not cease to make resound to the ears of the faithful, in the celebration of our divine mysteries, adding to them the following aspirations: "We praise Thee; we bless Thee; we adore Thee; we glorify Thee; O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord Jesus Christ, *** who taketh away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. *** Thou only, O Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost, art most high, in the glory of God the Father. Amen."

O, how beautiful, how touching, how transporting and rapturous are the aspirations of the *Gloria in Excelsis*! How consoling it is for us to think that the children of the Catholic Church, here upon earth, and the citizens of heaven, 142 praise and glorify God with the same spirit, the same mind, the same heart! But this is not surprising, for we are the children of the same Father, of God, who is charity!

The angels of God are our friends, our brothers, our guardians and defenders. In spite of our redemption by the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, the "great dragon, the old serpent, who is called devil and satan," continued the war against the children of Adam, and ceased not, "day and night," to accuse them before God, in order to be allowed to persecute them, so as to prevent the light of the gospel to bring fruits of salvation to the nations, then covered with darkness, and walking in the shadow of death. But "Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought. And they prevailed not."—Apoc. xii. 7. St. Michael and his angels conquered our enemies, most

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likely, in showing that a price of infinite value had been paid to God by Jesus Christ, and that the human race was entitled to all the favors of heaven.

If satan, full of wrath against us, accuses us before God, and asks to tempt and persecute us, and to place us under the most dreadful trials in order to make us lose patience, and curse His holy name, or, at least, to disobey some precept of His divine law, as it is evident by the history of holy Job; so the good angels, seeing in heaven the face of God, and burning with the fire of divine charity, ask to come down to us with heavenly blessings, and to defend us against all our enemies.

O, how ardent is the zeal of the holy angels for our souls! They know that, having been redeemed with the blood of Jesus Christ, and purified with His sanctifying grace, we are the children of God, the brothers of Jesus Christ, the temples of the Holy Ghost, the heirs of an eternal kingdom where we shall become their companions and associates in singing the praises of God our Father. Hence, their great zeal in suggesting to us good thoughts, good desires; in encouraging us to fulfill our duty and acquire merits; in destroying in our minds the evil impressions of our passions, too often, alas, inflamed by the “fiery darts” of the devil; in restoring to our hearts the good seed of the word of God, often taken out of our souls by our spiritual enemies.—Luke viii. 12. As a mother loves her child, so we are loved by our angel-guardians. They watch over us with great anxiety. Woe to the man who shall scandalize, and cause the ruin of a soul intrusted to their care! for we read in the gospel these words of our Saviour: “He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea.”—Luke xv. 7. And a little farther he says: “See that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say to you, that their angels always see the face of my Father, who is in heaven.”—Luke xv. 10.

What an abominable crime is the sin of scandal! To murder a sheep of Jesus Christ, to change almost an angel of light into an angel of darkness; to take out of the kingdom of the Lord a faithful servant; to render him the slave of satan; to deprive a beloved child of

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God of an eternal glory, and to throw him into an abyss of eternal torments, should he die unrepenting. Who could express the grief, the indignation of his angel-guardian, who loved him with the tenderness of a father for his child? No wonder, then, if he will ask God to chastise the murderer, the incarnate devil!

We will understand yet better the love of the holy angels for us, if we reflect on the words of our Saviour after the parable of the sheep lost, but found again: "And I say to you," says He, "that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance."—Luke xv. 7. *** And again, after the parable of the woman who recovered the piece of money which she had lost, he added: "So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance."—Luke xv. 10.

O ravishing charity of the angels of God! The conversion of a sinner is a source of great joy to them in heaven!

O sinner living in the state of moral sin, poor and unfortunate slave, blinded by your passions and the devil, and carried away in the abyss of all evils; how long will you continue in your madness? Do you not know that to-day you may die, and to-day your soul may be buried in hell forever? Remember the rich man of the gospel!—Luke xvi. 144 Raise, raise up your head to heaven! Behold the brightness, glory and eternal happiness of the angels who love you, pray for you, whose joy you may in some respect increase in returning to God by a sincere contrition, and a firm resolution of offending Him no more! Repent, then, do penance and be faithful to God till death, and the angels, full of joy, will carry your soul to heaven, as they brought the soul of Lazarus, the poor beggar, into the place of rest the very moment he expired.—Luke xvi.

The angels of God are our friends. The fathers and doctors of the Church have, at all times, invoked their powerful assistance, and instructed the faithful to have recourse often to their intercession. A passage from the works of Origen, who lived in the third century of Christianity, gives us an idea of the manner our predecessors in faith expressed

themselves on this subject. In a discourse addressed to the faithful assembled together, the great man spoke as follows:

“Comprehend, O man, if you can, all the bounty of your God. Lately you were under the slavery of the devil; to-day you are under the custody of the angels. For everything concerning your salvation, the angels are, in some manner, ready to be your servants; they come to consummate the work of the Son of God. What do they say to themselves? He descended from heaven; He took a body; He was pleased to be nailed to the cross, and to expire upon it for the salvation of men, and we could remain motionless! Let us go, let us go, faithful and zealous spirits; let us walk in the footsteps of our Master; let us descend from heaven!” *** Listen also to the beautiful prayer he addressed on that occasion to the holy angels: “Heavenly spirits, who are watching over every one of the faithful, assembled together in this place, strengthen these Christians, lately converted to the truth; help their weakness with all the cares of good and charitable physicians. This old man renouncing his errors, and binding himself to the truth is but a weak child in faith. Fortify his tottering steps; bring him to the sacred waters of regeneration; unite your efforts, immortal spirits, to open the eyes of those who have been deceived by the prestige of error, and render them docile to the holy inspirations of faith.”— *Origen, Homel, on Ezechiel, No. 7.*

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About two thousand years before Origen, we see the venerable Patriarch Jacob, when on his death-bed, praying thus for his two grandchildren: “May the angel that delivered me from all evils, bless these boys.”—Gen. xlviii. 16.

The Catholic Church, our mother, always guided by the Holy Ghost, invokes every day in the divine office the succor of the holy angels, and recommends to her children to address prayers to them all the days of their pilgrimage upon earth; but especially when admonished by sickness, that they have arrived at the tremendous door of *eternity*. In our last struggle with death we should not forget that the good angels are to be implored with

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a particular devotion and fervor. Read the prayers of the Church for the agonizing, and you will comprehend how you may then be assailed by your spiritual enemies, and to whom you can have recourse to put them to flight.

Yet a few remarks, and our task is over.

Sursum corda! And let us imagine that we see the brightness, the power, the bounty of God, almost God Himself infused in His holy angels, who with exultation sing His praises, and render thanks to Him for all His gifts. *** Who among us, contemplating their glory and happiness, would not feel a strong and vehement desire to be their companion in heaven? *** Let us rejoice, we all shall occupy a throne in the same kingdom, we all shall enjoy the same honors, pleasures and eternal felicity with our brothers, the holy angels. *** But remark it well, on the condition that here upon earth we shall walk in their footsteps, in the path of obedience to the will of God. Then let our motto be these words of St. Michael: "Who is like God?" When Lucifer had rebelled against God and endeavored to draw to himself the whole court of heaven, St. Michael opposed him, and exclaimed: "Who is like God?" Let us follow his example, as did the good angels. Hence, let no trial, no temptation prevent you from fulfilling your duty, cost what it will.

Many, many times the old serpent will offer you the forbidden fruit; he will tempt you with evil thoughts, evil suggestions, evil desires, promising you honors, riches, pleasures, joy and happiness. Thus he deceived our first parents; thus he deceived millions of millions of the human race; thus he tried to deceive Christ himself. *** Be careful, watch and pray, if you will, take the angels, be victorious, and trample under your feet the internal serpent and all his associates.

Hence, above all, bear in mind that God alone is great, powerful, self-existent, source of all beings, filling up all creation, having life and death, pleasures and sufferings at His command. The good angels never forgot it; and they always loved their Creator, served Him and were happy. If, then, your enemies bring to your mind thoughts of pride; if they

tell you that you are strong, rich, powerful, wise, and endeavor to make you despise your duty to God, or to your neighbor, answer them: "Who is like God? Before Him, I am but dust; my neighbor I must respect and love like myself, because it is His command; I will never deviate from it." If your enemies inspire you with hatred, and thoughts of revenge against the man, who has grievously offended you by words or actions, say again: "Who is like God? His law orders me to forgive my persecutors, even the most cruel; shall I rebel against Him? No, no, rather to die." If your enemies have almost imperceptibly infused darkness in your mind, and poison in your heart, and you are tempted to gratify a beastly passion by thoughts, words or actions, say to yourself: "Who is like God? He is here present; shall I comply with such devilish suggestions? No, never, never! O, good God, help me, send down Thy holy angel to protect me!" *** Fear not, O man of good will; thy prayer has been heard: thou shalt not perish, though all the powers of hell would stand against thee. Who is like God? He is for thee, His angels are for thee. Fear not, for "He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. *** Thou shalt walk upon the asp, and the basilisk, and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon."

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No. VI. THE SPIRITS OF DARKNESS. Wickedness, Power, and Malice of the Spirits of Darkness against us, Poor Sinners—How to Resist their Temptations, and Put them to Flight.

"God created man incorruptible, and to the image of His own likeness He made him, but by the envy of the devil, death came into the world."—Wisdom xi. 23-24.

"Be sober and watch, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour."—I St. Peter v.8.

In this world there is a certain kind of malignant spirits whom we call devils; and this is acknowledged by the universal consent of all nations, and of all peoples. Greek and Roman histories give convincing proofs of this general belief, which is yet confirmed by

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the science of black art, practiced in all parts of the earth. We learn, also, by the annals of antiquity, that the Chaldeans, the sages of Egypt, and more so the sect of Indian philosophers, called by the Greeks gymnosophists, excited the admiration of peoples by divers illusions and predictions too precise to be merely attributed to the science of astronomy. Nay, the disciples of Plato and Pythagoras, who are considered by all as the most profound philosophers of antiquity, have taught as a truth excluding all doubt, that there are in this world devils, malicious spirits, and that they ought to be appeased by sacrifices. Hence, the Emperor Julian, the Apostate, having re-established paganism, observed abstinences in their honor, and offered sacrifices to them. Such is the malice of these evil spirits, that they could not hide their wickedness 148 from those who were their slaves, and by whom they were worshiped like gods. These remarks are from Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux.

Let us now open the Holy Scriptures, and they will manifest to us, in full light, the malice, the power, and the deceits of these evil spirits.

What a frightful picture of Satan we find in Genesis. Adam and Eve, fresh from the hand of God, are united to Him by the gifts of Faith, Hope and Charity; surrounded with creatures of every kind, which are to them so many proofs of His bounty, they live happy in the earthly paradise, and they expect a greater happiness, promised to their fidelity in accomplishing the commands of their Creator. Their minds and their hearts, innocent and full of vigor, are animated with the most pure and most ardent sentiments of love and gratitude towards their Benefactor. The whole creation preaches to them love and obedience to their Maker. Who shall be able to destroy such a harmony? Devoured with envy in seeing our first parents' felicity, Satan endeavored with all his might to effect their ruin, and to precipitate, along with them, into the same abyss, all their descendants. Behold the monster! he has transformed himself into a beast, into a serpent; and so masked, he advances towards Eve, and says to her: "Why hath God commanded that you should not eat of every tree of paradise?" Eve answered him: "God has commanded us that we should not eat, and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die." "No, you shall not die the death," replied

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the infernal serpent; “but you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Eve was seduced, “took of the fruit and did eat, and gave to her husband, who did eat.”—Genesis iii. And they swallowed up with the forbidden fruit the curse of God; they lost their happiness, and were subject to innumerable evils, which were also to be the inheritance of all their descendants; and now, every day, about eighty thousand of the human race die victims of the curse then pronounced by God: “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.” Dreadful sentence, which has already brought millions of millions of Adam's family into the grave, and which shall, sooner or later, send very one 149 of us into the tomb! Keep in mind these words of the Holy Scriptures: “By the envy of the devil death came into the world.” And then you shall exclaim: No doubt, Satan is most cruel enemy of the human race.

In order to acquire a still deeper knowledge of the malice, of the power, of the deceits and snares of the spirits of darkness, we will take chiefly for our teachers and guides Jesus Christ, His Apostles, His Church with her doctors and saints. So long as we shall pay due respect to their lessons, and strive to walk in their footsteps, we shall trample under foot the asp and the basilisk, the lion and the dragon.—Ps. xc.

Let us first listen to the instructions and admonitions of Jesus Christ, and He will tell us to watch and pray, that we may repulse all the attacks of the devil; He will tell us to fear his deceits, his snares and power; because he is a liar and the father of lies; because he is a murderer from the beginning.—John viii. 44. Because often, when men have heard the word of God, he “cometh and taketh the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.”—Luke viii. 12. And again, He admonishes us, that there is a certain kind of evil spirits which cannot be repulsed but by prayer and fasting. In another place we see Him stirring up the vigilance of Peter by these words: “Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat.”—Luke xxii.31. Elsewhere He teaches us that, when the unclean spirit has gone out of a man he cannot take rest, but that he is

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coming back to tempt him, and if repulsed, he does not lose courage but goes for some other devils worse than himself, and returns to that man to cause his ruin.—Luke xi.

No man whose life is so holy, so full of good and heroic works, as to deter Satan from endeavoring to overthrow him, and to make him his slave, though he might be the most faithful servant of God. Call to mind Christ's temptation in the desert. Behold the devil inflamed with wrath against Him! He has seen Him fasting, taking no food during forty days and forty nights, and spending His whole time in prayer and contemplation; he cannot delay any 150 longer his attacks; no matter if He be the Son of God, and if all his efforts be without success. See his audacity towards Jesus Christ: "If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread." Defeated in his first attack, he takes Him, sets Him upon the pinnacle of the temple, and tries to induce Him to cast Himself down, telling Him that, as it is written, God will send His angels to protect Him. Defeated again by our Saviour, he takes Him up to a very high mountain, where by deceitful illusions, he shows Him all the kingdoms of the earth, which he promises to give Him, if He will adore him. Thunderstruck by these words of Christ: "Begone, Satan"—Matthew iv., he went away. But it is remarked by one of the sacred writers, that it was only for a time. Hence "Be sober and watch, etc."

New proofs of the deceits and power of Satan and his wicked angels may be drawn from the Epistles of St. Paul. That great Apostles, selected by the mercy of God to bring the good tidings of the gospel among so many nations, lying in the shadow of death, had received by the light of the Holy Ghost a very deep knowledge not only of heavenly things, but also of the power of the spirits of darkness, to enable him to destroy their empire, and to establish that of Jesus Christ. Hear him and follow his admonitions: "Put you on the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places.—Eph. vi.11-12. Reflect on these words, invoke the Holy Ghost, and you shall understand, that, if you desire to be saved, you must fight against principalities and powers, against

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the rulers of the world of this darkness; you shall comprehend that, weak as we are, we ought not to trust in our own strength, but in the armor of God, in faith, hope and charity, and above all, in frequent prayer, according to these words of the same Apostles: "By all prayer, and supplication praying at all times in the spirit;" that "you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one"—Eph. vi. 16; that you may escape his deceits and 151 snares, "for Satan transformeth himself into an angel of light. —II Cor. xi. 14.

Listen, now, to the words of St. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ: "Woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that the he hath but a short time."—Apoc. xii. 2. And keep in mind that he "is the old serpent, *** who seduceth the whole world."—Apoc,xii.9.

No less strong are the expressions of the Prince of the Apostles: "Be sober and watch; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist ye strong in faith."—I Peter v. 8-9. As you would be terrified at the sight of a furious lion, coming towards you to devour your body, so you ought to fear the suggestions of the devil, to seduce you and cause your eternal perdition; such is the lesson the Apostle desires to impress upon our minds with the recommendation to resist him with the arms of faith.

There is no hope to stand against so powerful an enemy but by watching and praying with fervor, full of confidence in the promise of God to assist us in all our trials and temptations. Let us never forget what we read of him elsewhere in the Holy Scriptures: "There is no power upon earth who can be compared with him, *** he is king over all the children of pride."—Job xli. It is he who put in the heart of Judas to betray Christ.—John xiii. 2. It is he who tempted Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Ghost, and consequently was the cause of their dreadful death.—Acts v. 3. It is he who induced David to number his people by vanity, and thus brought grief and lamentation in Israel.—Chron. xxi 1. It is he who, when he had received of God the permission of trying the virtue of Job, poured upon him

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a torrent of afflictions, and struck him with a very grievous ulcer, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head.—Job ii. Satan is very powerful! Satan is the enemy of our race! Hence, I cannot repeat too often the admonition of St. Peter: “Be sober and watch.”

Let us now consult the Church of God, the spouse of Christ, the pillar and ground of truth, appointed by our 152 Saviour to teach all nations all truths concerning religion and our eternal welfare. Her instructions and prayers shall give us full evidence of our being surrounded by wicked spirits, continually striving to separate us from God by inducing us to at against His commandments , in order to plunge us into abyss of all evils.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent, which has been approved and recommended by several Popes, demonstrates the malignity, the deceits and power of Satan by this text of the sacred writings: “our wresting is not against flesh,” etc. And then it adds: “We may hence learn that the power of the infernal enemy is formidable, his courage undaunted, and his hatred cruel and implacable. He wages against us a perpetual war with such immitigable fury, that with him there is no peace, no cessation of hostilities.”— *Catechism C. T., Lords's Prayer*. Read also in the Roman Ritual, the prayers the Church addresses to God by her ministers, when they bless holy water or administer the sacraments of baptism and extreme unction, or even when they recommend to Him a soul just departing this world, and you will see that the spirits of darkness are numerous, powerful, and burning with an implacable hatred against us. Hence, that her ministers may not forget that we are surrounded by such dreadful enemies, the Church strictly commands them to recite every day these words; “Be sober and watch, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist ye strong in faith.” And when they begin to put on the vestment for the celebration of the holy sacrifice, they have to say this prayer: “O God, put on my head the shield of salvation, that I may repulse the incursions of the devil?”

Hence, the necessity for all, of offering up pure and pious prayers to God, imploring Him not to suffer us to be tempted above our strength.— *Cath. C. T., Lords Prayer*.

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The lives of the saints could furnish us so many other proofs of the malice, of the deceits, and of the power of Satan, were we not already convinced of it by the lessons of Jesus Christ, of His Apostles and His Church. I will give 153 you but one illustration: Behold St. Anthony in the desert, living almost the life of an angel! Satan watches him; he sees his piety, his fervor, his incessant prayers, his love of God and of his neighbor. It is enough to inflame his wrath against him. Nothing shall be left undone that can cause his ruin. He first troubles his soul with a thousand thoughts of discouragement; secondly, he fills his mind with immodest imaginations; at last he appears to him under a human form, most attractive, to seduce him, as we read it in his life written by St. Athanasius. One day Anthony, perceiving by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, the whole universe covered with the devil's snares, was so much terrified that he exclaimed: "O Lord, who shall be able to escape them all?" God was with him and he was victorious. His motto to his disciples was: "The devil dreads fasting, prayer, humility, good works."— *Life of St. Anthony by St. Athanasius*.

It is not out of place here to remark that the spiritrappers are reprobate spirits, coming to converse with men to deceive them, as is proved by the writings of learned men, many of whom were at first totally incredulous, but were afterwards forced to change their opinion by incontestable facts which they witnessed, or heard related by scientific men, who in present circumstances could not be deceived. Nothing new in these manoeuvres of the spirits of darkness, but a mere renewal of old Paganism, as we learn it from the reading of the Apology of Tertullian in favor of Christianity, written in the third century, and addressed to the first magistrates of the Roman Empire. "Now," says he to them, "if magicians make phantoms appear, if they evoke the souls of the dead, if they cause children to utter oracles; if, skillful charlatans, they know even how to send dreams by the help of devils, whom they have invoked and by whom goats and tables foretell things to come, how much rather will these seducing powers do for themselves, and by themselves, what they perform for strangers."

Learn, also, from Tertullian that these works of the evil spirits are for the ruin of man. Enraged against God who has banished them from heaven, condemned to eternal 154 punishment, and unable to satisfy their hatred against Him who is all-powerful, they turn all their hatred towards man, who has been created to the image of God. "It is that hatred," says Bossuet, "which induces Satan to advance against us in a hidden and impenetrable manner. He does not shine as lightning, he does not roar as thunder; he is like a pestilential vapor that floats in the atmosphere spreading an invisible and imperceptible contagion into our sense; he infuses his poison into the heart, or, to make use of a comparison yet more proper, he slips like a serpent. ** Is your heart already moved by a feeling of love? He blows upon this little spark until it is all fire; he excites from hatred to rage; from love to transport, from transport to . Does he find you far removed from crime, enjoying the holy delights of a good conscience; believe not that he will at once propose to you the crime of impurity; he is too wise, says St. Chrysostom; he uses towards us much condescension. *** Ah! it will be but a look, says the devil to our soul; after that, at most a complacency, a pleasure. Be cautious, the serpent advances, you give him free access, he is about to bite; a fire passes from vein to vein, and runs through the whole body. You must have her. *** But it is a crime! it matters not. *** She has a husband! let him die. You cannot do it alone! let us engage many others in our crime; let us make use of fraud and perfidy. David! David! the unfortunate David! who ignores his history?

Judas! let us inspire him to sell his Master. The crime is horrible! let us go by degrees; first, that he may steal his money; then, that he may sell him. Behold the bait, avarice; he has given his consent, he belongs to us. Let us bring him from avarice to robbery, from robbery to treason, to the rope, to despair. Awake, and do not allow yourselves to be seduced by Satan.

Let us bear in mind, and never forget, that we are surrounded with powerful and invisible enemies burning with envy and hatred against us. All they desire is our ruin and eternal damnation. The Holy Ghost in our sacred writings represents them to us as wise serpents,

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roaring lions, or 155 most ferocious beasts inflamed with fury against us, and also, as most wicked and most powerful enemies, changing themselves into angels of light, taking no rest day or night, but continually at work to draw us into the abyss of sin, in order to make us partakers of all their torments.

What shall we do? How to discover all their snares, and extinguish all their fiery darts? Weak as we are; blinded by our passions, carried away by the example of so many who live as if there was no God, no other life, no eternity; is it possible for us to repulse all the temptations of so many powerful and invisible enemies? Is there any hope of resisting their attacks, or have we to consider our eternal salvation an impossibility? *** Our salvation an impossibility! God forbid! Better for us never to have existed! True, very true, these wicked spirits are wise, powerful, cruel and numerous. Too many of them have placed their throne in the hearts not only of unbelievers, but also of many of those who call themselves Christians, and they do all in their power to blind them more and more, to bring them from sin to sin, from abyss to abyss during their lifetime, in order to plunge them, when dead, into the eternal abyss. But we ought to keep in mind, that, if they perish, it is through their own fault, because they refuse to use the means of salvation offered to all by our Divine Redeemer. Remember that all their temptations cannot make us fall into sin, without the free consent of our own will. If we are flesh and very weak, God is all-powerful, and will never permit our enemies to tempt us above our strength; we are even assured that all our combats will be crowned with victory, so long as we shall follow the instructions and admonitions of Jesus Christ and His Church.

Do not forget that, if you desire to vanquish all your enemies, you ought, first of all, bear in mind that God is your Father; that He is everywhere, replenishing all creation with His divine substance; that, if you invoke Him through the merits of Jesus Christ He will, doubtless, protect you, and no power will be able to cause your ruin, for we have the promise of our Saviour. Do not allow your minds to be overcharged with the things of this world, but reflect often 156 on death, judgement, heaven, hell, eternity. Receive the sacraments of the Church after due preparation; they are fountains of spiritual life. Invoke

the intercession of Mary and of all the angels and saints, and flee, as much as possible, from the occasion of sin. Follow these salutary advices, and yet a short time all glory, all felicity, all happiness shall surround you, and shall penetrate your whole being, soul and body, for ever and ever. Amen.

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No. VII. THE GRAVE BRINGS LIGHT TO OUR MIND. Out of the Darkness of the Grave is Springing up a Great Light, for every Reasonable Man, who is Willing to See the Truth, and to be Guided by it, Cost what it Will.

Memento, homo, quia pulvis es et in pulverem reverteris. Remember, O man, that dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.

O, how comes it, that we forget we are mortals? Thousands of millions of our fellow-creatures have already preceded us in this life! Are they not an attestation of that sentence: "Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return."—Gen. iii. 19. Our first forefathers, whose bodily constitution was stronger than ours, lived many centuries; but death at last overcame them all. They are fallen—they are gone—they have been reduced to dust—they are no more. Open the Holy Scriptures, read the genealogies of the patriarchs, and you will find them closed with words worthy of your daily meditation: All the time that Adam lived came to nine hundred and thirty years, and he died. All the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died. All the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years, and he died. All the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years, and he died.—Gen. v.

The sacred volume speaks of many others, whose genealogy is also closed by the same words— *and he died*. Why are the words, *and he died*, repeated so often? Are they not vain words? No; they are not. If they have been repeated so often by the sacred writer, it is to impress more strongly 158 upon our minds the thought of death; for the thought of death is like a celestial or heavenly light which discovers to us the false brightness of

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temporal things. The thought of death enlightens our souls, and destroys in our hearts our unruly and violent passions. The thought of death reminds us of the severe justice of God, who has sentenced mankind to death for the sin of one man. The thought of death inspires us with the fear of the Lord, which is true wisdom. The thought of death is the most efficacious remedy against pride, avarice, envy, luxury, sensuality in eating and drinking, and indolence. The thought of death is a preservative against all kinds of sins. *"In all thy works, remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin,"* says the Holy Ghost by the mouth of Ecclesiasticus vii. 40. Let us follow the advice of the Divine Spirit, and let us think on death.

What is death? Death is the separation of our soul from our body. It puts an end to our being in this world. A person when dead is deprived of honor, riches, dignities, titles and lands; he has lost all his bodily and mental qualifications; his eyes cannot see; his ears cannot hear; his tongue is silent; his feet are unable to walk; his hands cannot move.

Represent to yourself the most perfect man you have known or heard of; a man charitable to the poor, amiable in conversation, loved by all on account of his virtues; a man favored by Divine Providence with the best memory, solid judgment and beautiful features. Does death strike him with his sword? He is as nothing, save a fine flower, cut off and faded in one moment. O, what a change death is, working upon the unfortunate children of Adam! If a man is but for two or three days in the power of death, his corpse begins to fall into corruption, and becomes the food of worms!

Fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, friends, relations and neighbors, hasten to shed tears over the object of your love! Yes, hasten to weep yet a few moments at his side! You cannot long enjoy that last consolation! However great your love for your dead friend may be, the offensive tokens of corruption in his corpse will not permit you to keep it, even for one week, exposed to your sight. You must cover it, must hide it in a coffin; you must enclose it in a tomb, and leave it in the ground! You can sometimes for two or three days surround the corpse of a beloved father or mother, husband or wife, but

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not any longer. The offensive indications become too disgusting; you are forced, for the preservation of your own health, to do violence to yourselves, and to consign the body to the earth. There, his flesh shall be visited by worms! There, his corpse shall be their food for several months! There, all his flesh shall be devoured! There, his remains shall be reduced into dust! O, remember, remember it well, O man, that *dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return*.

There is no man ignorant of these truths; but unhappily, most unhappily, most deeply to be deplored, few think of death; very few reflect on it! O insensibility! O blindness! O folly! By what fury are we transported? Whither do we go? What are our thoughts? What are our occupations? What are our pretensions? What are our hopes? All our thoughts and desires are for this world. Pleasures, honors, riches—these earthly concerns occupy our minds day and night. We live upon earth as if we were never to die, and we make no preparation for our eternal fate. We believe a religion which says to all: Do good during the short pilgrimage of thy life, and thou shalt be happy forever in heaven! Woe to those who spend their days in sin and idleness, for they shall be cast into everlasting flames!

O senseless men, we may die in an hour, in a moment, and yet we do not keep ourselves ready to appear before God! O, would to God that my voice were stronger than thunder, then would I cry out with my whole strength: You who sleep in the shadow of this world, awake! awake! Do not wait till to-morrow for your conversion! Return to-day to the Lord! Death shall cut off the thread of your life sooner than you think. Alas! how many thinking to live a long life have been taken away by a sudden death! How often have you heard it related that such a man was slain by the sword, another shot and killed, another frozen to death, another drowned, this man died at the table, that 160 one at play; some have been consumed by fire, others have been killed by robbers; and many died suddenly in the midst of their friends. And thus is fulfilled the sentence of Jesus: *The Son of Man will come at the hour when He is not looked for*. Be always prepared to render to God an account of your actions; think often of death, and you shall not be found unprepared. *In all thy works, remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin*. For what is the cause of

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our sins? Examine your conscience. Is it not your unruly and violent passions joined to the suggestions of the devil? Well, however numerous your unruly and violent passions may be, should they be like a raging fire agitated by a strong wind, you can appease them, if you wish, and even destroy all their strength. Pour over the fire of your passions the salutary balm of the thought of death, and they shall be soon overcome. Yes, if you think often on death you shall easily rule your bad affections. You know how difficult it is to moderate your love for riches, honors, pleasures; nevertheless, I can show you that with the thought of death you can destroy in your hearts these insatiable desires.

Friends of riches, honors and pleasures, come with me; let us go in mind among the dead; be not afraid! Let us go into those places where rest the bodies of the greatest men of the world, and there let us reflect: You behold fine columns and beautiful inscriptions on their tombs. Let us not look long on these last trophies of human grandeur—let us descend into their tombs—let us open their coffins. Oh! consider them now! Speak to them! To those men whose names are immortal! Princes and kings of the earth, where are now your palaces and your beautiful gardens! Where are your scepters and your crowns? Where are your retinues, your wives and children? Where are your riches and possessions? Alas! they are silent, they do not answer me. Cruel death, thou hast deprived them of the power of speaking! Thou hast taken away all their faculties, titles and possessions; palaces, gardens, scepters, retinues, wives and children! They have lost all by the stroke of thy sword! Without respect for their grandeur, thou hast dragged 161 of them, like the most debased of slaves, into that obscure dungeon; thou hast shut them up in this place of grief! Cruel death, thou hast delivered them to become the food of worms! O death, thou art merciless! O death, thou art too cruel!

Behold, dear friends, behold now the vanity of human things! Among those victims, who have fallen beneath the stroke of death, I perceive some who had attained a higher degree of glory than the others; their heroic actions procured them the highest rank in the history of mankind. Come here, see and reflect at leisure! Here rests an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Napoleon! Let us address them: Great men, what has become of your glory and power?

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Alas! could they answer my question, they would say: Ah! do not speak of glory and power here; all our power and glory are annihilated! Those remains which you behold attest it to you! The whole world is yet speaking of the prowess of our actions, but pitiless, merciless death has stricken us; it has dragged us into this place of desolation; it has given our bodies to worms; they have taken possession of our substance, and they have devoured all our flesh! Poor mortals, no one among you have comprehends the cruelty of death!

Let us now reflect a few moments! Men who have filled the universe with the fame of their victories, are thus treated by the conquering hand of death! What subject can be more worthy of our meditation! When upon earth, one of their looks was sufficient to convey joy or sadness into the hearts of the beholders; vanquished by death, thrust into the grave, they cannot defend their very eyes against the satellites of death! Upon earth, the words of their mouths were often received as oracles; in the tomb, their mouths and tongues are devoured by worms. Upon earth, their ears were delighted with the conversation of a great number of friends; in the grave, they are full of corruption! Upon earth, they were crowned with flowers, gold and diamonds; in the tomb, their crown is a crown of rottenness! Upon earth, their hands were keeping riches and distributing favors; in the grave, their hands are full of the most disgusting vermin! Upon earth, they had command over millions of subjects; in the grave, thousands of worms feed upon their bodies, which they do not abandon until the flesh is entirely consumed!

O great God! what shall become of us? Have mercy on us! O have mercy on us! O vanity of vanities, and all is vanity! O man, whoever thou art, shouldst thou be the most powerful king of the world, shouldst thou have received from God the power of commanding the sun, the moon, the stars, and all created beings from one thousand years, still thou art nothing in His sight; thou art a slave, thou art a subject of death, thou art the food of worms. Do not boast in my presence, for I will say to three: If the worms which shall devour thy body were here present and could speak, they would tell three: Hold thy peace, O proud man, do not boast; God will soon give us thy body for our food; we are in some respects greater than thou art. O mortal man! O sinner! tell me where is thy glory? Alas!

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instructed in the school of death, I see no more glory upon earth; all is vanity! Yes, all is vanity, except serving God and loving Him alone. He, alone, is stronger than death; He, alone, can repair the evils of that monster, which destroys all generations.

Yes, dear friends, death is a very powerful monster; it devours all the children of Adam; it carries grief and sadness into all the families of the world; it is the common cause of tears to fathers, mothers and children. If you see them covered with the garments of grief and mourning, if you see a profound sadness spread over their countenance, and ask them the cause of their affliction, all will answer you: Death has fallen upon our families. One will say to you: I was the husband of a virtuous wife; she was my comfort upon earth; but death has taken her from me, and I am now the most unfortunate of men. Another will tell you: You see my gray hairs, and by them you may know my great age; I had but one son to support me; I am unable to work; my son was so good towards his old father! Since death separated him from me, God alone knows how much I have to suffer! May God soon unite me to my dear son! A mother in tears will say to you: Behold my poor little children without a father; they want bread and clothing. O death, why hast thou not taken the life of their mother and left 163 them their father? O God, help me to support with patience and resignation the heavy cross Thou hast placed upon me! Another will answer you with a sigh from a heart which seems filled almost to bursting: O, how miserable is life to me; there is no more comfort upon earth for me; I am the most desolate of mothers! Husband, children, all have departed, all are dead! O, unfortunate mother that I am! Ask the young orphan, what has deprived him of the joy so natural to his age, and he will answer you: As long as my father and mother remained with me, I was joyful and happy; but since death has deprive me of both, I am in grief. O, let us say it again, death is too cruel; it is a monster!

But, how long has death been upon earth, exercising its fury? Since the world existed, it has not ceased to sacrifice human victims. We do not see upon earth a man two hundred years old. About six thousand years ago the world was created, and death has destroyed all generations, except those now living. It will not be long before it shall send us into the

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region of the dead. In less than an hundred years, we shall be in the power of worms and rottenness. They shall devour all our flesh to the very bones, and even our bones under the power of death shall be reduced to ashes. It is not, therefore, without a good reason I called death a monster.

Who has brought death upon earth? Did God in the beginning create man subject to death? No, God created man immortal. Was the devil the author of death? No, he could not alone produce such a monster; he was the occasion of death making its appearance upon earth, but he was not the author of it. Where, then, and by whom was death produced? Hear me, and I will tell you; it was produced in the heart of man, and by the ungrateful will of man. There, the monster was born! Adam took the forbidden fruit; he ate of it, and his bosom was poisoned; his blood corrupted, and there was no more immortality upon earth. We come from him; we draw our extraction from his poisoned bosom, from his corrupted blood, and we carry from generation to generation the seed of corruption, the 164 seed of death. The monster is now following step by step all the children of Adam; he will take no rest, until he shall have brought them all into the region of the dead. We cannot hope to be spared by the sword of death; babes in the cradle, children, young men, men in the flower of their age, old men, all without exception shall be ranked among the dead and reduced to dust. Remember, O man, that dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.

Yes, let us remember it, and we shall all exclaim: O sin, O cursed sin, be cursed by all forever! Thou, alone, art the cause of all our evils; thou hast excluded man from the earthly paradise; thou hast filled the earth with grief and tears; thou hast brought death everywhere. *By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin, death.*—Rom. v. 2. O, let us detest sin from the bottom of our hearts! It is a monster much more dangerous than death; it is the breaker of peace between God and man; it shuts the gates of heaven against us; it draws millions of our fellow-creatures into everlasting flames.

If sinners ask me, what shall we do to destroy in ourselves the curse of sin? I will answer them: Weep sinners, weep over your sins; weep over them day and night. Be sincerely converted to the Lord; be ready to lose your lives rather than offend Him. Accomplish all His commands, and I will announce to you good tidings; I will say to you in His name: Do not fear death, neither for yourselves, nor for your friends; if they are faithful to the laws of the gospel, death has very little power over you or over them, because, by its stroke, it shall give freedom to your souls, and your souls, freed from their bodies, shall ascend into heaven to enjoy the happiness of the elect. Remember the sweet name of Jesus, your Savior, the conquerer of death; He has the keys of all the tombs; do not fear, be always His friends by living a good life, and at the last day your bodies shall rise again and be invested with immortal glory!

O death! cruel death! where, then, shall be thy power? Thou shalt no more have power over the just, the elect of God! Thou shalt be shut up in the eternal abyss to reign over the wicked; there thou shalt torture them forever, there thou shalt become their second death!

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Let us, dear friends, let us think often on death, and what is to follow it, and we shall not offend God! Who, knowing that death was brought upon earth by one sin, would not be terrified at the thought of sin! Let the greatest sinners but think of death, and they will know, at least in part, what is the grievousness of sin, and they will sin no more. Who would dare commit a mortal sin, were he instructed by a miracle of the enormity of it? Suppose that God will work that miracle for our instruction, and that by His power, we are transported to the summit of hills surrounding an immense plain, and that His voice is heard crying to all the dead from Abel down to those of our own time: Come, ye dead, come all, stand erect in that plain; by your sight and words you shall instruct all the living, your fellow-creatures. Suppose, also, that by the power of God, we behold in that plain millions of millions of human forms, all moving at the command of the Almighty, and that we see them distinctly; they have no flesh, their bones are entirely uncovered. At the same

moment a voice of thunder cries out to us: By one sin they have lost their flesh! consider well the effect of sin! God speaks again to the dead, and says to them: Let your human frame be invested with flesh; be again as you were, a few months after having been laid in your graves; be again covered with worms and putrefaction; thus, you shall better instruct your fellow-creatures; you shall better preach to them what sin is; sinners shall be terrified, and many will return to me by sorrow and penance. God continues to address His word to the dead, as follows: By my order, O ye dead, you, all together, shall cry out to them: Fear the Almighty, and fear Him alone! Woe to him that does not fear God! a thousand woes to the man that commits sin! ten thousand woes to him, who, living in the state of mortal sin, is unmindful of his misfortune!

Suppose now, dear friends, that all the dead, in order to obey the command of God, cry out to us: Fear the Almighty, and fear Him alone! woe to him that does not fear God! a thousand woes to the man that commits sin! ten thousand woes to him, who, living in the state of mortal sin, is unmindful of his misfortune!

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And by the permission of God, they add what follows: O sinners, tremble, groan, lament and weep; for the same God who has sentenced mankind to death for the sin of Adam shall soon send you to everlasting flames, on account of your iniquities! And you do not reflect upon it! You do not think of it! You despise your God! He shall despise you in His turn! He shall chastise you in His wrath! O sinners, what will you do in everlasting flames, tormented by a God who has condemned mankind to death for the sin of one man? Fear sin! weep over your sins!

At the tremendous sight, at these terrifying words pronounced with a voice of thunder by so many millions of voices, who, among us, would not cry out: O God, have mercy on us! No more sin for us! Remove the dreadful vision!

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What more shall I add to affright sinners? I will tell you, that if we should see such a vision and hear from the dead such a discourse, many of us, if not all, would fall down dead through fear, except we were strengthened by the power of God. O, dreadful effect of sin! O man, awake, and sin no more!

You know, dear friends, that this supposition may be supported by the Holy Scriptures. It is an article of our faith that all mankind have been sentenced to death for the sin of our first father. Do not tell me, then, that I have said things too dreadful, for I would answer you, in the name of God: What! you are terrified by these thoughts, and yet you live in peace, or try to live in peace with your conscience, perhaps, loaded with crimes! Be in fear, O sinners! for the same God who threatened our first father with death if he should eat the forbidden fruit, threatens us with everlasting fire if we die in the state of mortal sin. This is true; Adam ate the forbidden fruit and mankind fell under the sentence of death, and every day some of our fellow-creatures depart this life; and all those who die guilty of mortal sin are cast into everlasting fire.

O, let us remember that one sin has brought death upon earth! That thought is a salutary balm against all our unruly passions. Let us make use of it every day, and it will 167 encourage us to observe with great fervor all the commands of God.

Hence, are you puffed up with pride? Do you highly esteem yourself as being rich, wise and powerful? Do you despise the illiterate, the weak and the poor? You offend God; go in mind to the tomb of the proud man; open his coffin and consider. O, why was he so proud; he who was to become the food of worms? Before retiring, will you not say to yourself: A proud man is a foolish man, for having the light of reason, he does not make use of it; thus, your pride shall be shaken. Make often the name meditation, and it shall be conquered. Are you attached to riches? Is your heart without compassion for the poor? Are you gold and silver the gods you worship? Remember the rich man of the gospel; he died and was carried into hell, where, he shall be tortured forever; even one drop of water shall always be refused him! What did it profit him to have had all the comforts of

this life, and to be without compassion for poor Lazarus lying at his door? Has the spirit of revenge taken possession of your soul? Does he inspire you with hatred against you neighbor? Do you listen to his suggestions? Do you seek opportunities of rendering evil for evil? Go in mind to the coffin of the revengeful man! Behold him, who, without respect for the command of God, died unwilling to forgive his enemy! His soul has been buried in hell, and his body, which you see covered with corruption, shall soon rise again to be partaker of the torments of his soul! Is your mind full of immodest imaginations? Are you plunged into the vice of luxury? Are you one of those whose eyes are full of adulteries, according to the expression of St. Peter? You are on the brink of hell, the unclean spirit has already taken possession of your soul. Will you break his chains and cease to be his slave, in order not to fall into hell at the moment of your death? Go fast in mind to the tomb of one of those, who, when upon earth, captivated the beholders by their beauty! Behold her! She died but a few months ago, and all her beauty is annihilated; nothing remains of her but rottenness, corruption and bones! What a folly for a man to lose his immortal soul for beauty that is soon to become the food of worms! Do you indulge in excessive eating or drinking? Consider a corpse devoured by worms, and you will understand for whom you are fattening the victim; you will become ashamed of yourself, and conquer the vile passion which has brought to perdition so many souls.

In all your temptations think on death; in all your doubts remember death! O death, thou art a great light for every man who knows how to reflect! The thought of thee enlightens our minds and gives strength to our hearts; thou art the best of instructors; thou art the conquerer of all the unruly passions; thou art friend of the faithful followers of Jesus; they love to reflect on those words of holy Job: "I said to rottenness, thou art my father; to worms, thou art my mother and sister" (xvii. 14), and to say often with him: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day, I shall arise out of the earth, and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another; this, my hope, laid up in my bosom."—xiv. 25. Amen.

No. VIII. ETERNITY! ETERNITY! ETERNITY! After The Last Sentence of the Sovereign Judge of the Universe every Man shall go into the House of the Eternity—The Just into Heaven, and Sinners into Everlasting Punishment.

“Man shall go into the house of his eternity.—Eccles. xii. 5

“Fear ye not them that kill the body and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him that can destroy both soul and body in hell.”—Matt. x. 28.

These are the words of Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life; these are the words of Him who is the Light of Light, who has come into this world to dispel the profound darkness of our minds, and to make His divine light shine into our souls; these are the words of Jesus our most beloved Redeemer; let them be ingrafted in our minds and in our hearts; and we shall often say to ourselves: Why fear to lose this temporal life, since no one on this earth can escape the stroke of death? What madness and folly to rebel against the law of Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell!

Yes, let us fear God, and fear Him alone; such a fear will be most beneficial to our immortal souls; for “the fear of the Lord,” says David the prophet, “is the beginning of wisdom.”—Ps. cx. 10. “The fear of the Lord,” adds another inspired writer, “is a crown of wisdom, filling up peace and the fruit of salvation.”—Eccles. i. 22.

Whoever fears God alone possesses a crown more precious than if made of silver, gold and diamonds of the 170 highest price; he is crowned with wisdom; he loves God with an ardent love; he observes all His commandments with great fidelity and fervor; he gathers up, every day, fruits of salvation; he enjoys the sweetness of peace in this vale of tears, and after this life he shall be received into the kingdom of God to be partaker of His glory for ever.

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Hence, the Holy Ghost has pronounced by the mouth of Ecclesiastes, the following oracle: "Fear God and keep His commandments, for his is all man."—Eccles. xii. 13. This is the whole business and duty of man.

O wholesome fear, precious gift of the Holy Ghost! O fruit of peace and salvation, may our bountiful God keep thee always living in our souls!

To excite that holy fear in our hearts, we will meditate on the last judgment, and on what is to precede and to follow it.

Let us begin by reflecting on the words of Jesus Christ, speaking of the end of the world: "And there shall be signs," says He, "in the sun, in the moon and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of the sea and of the waves. Men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world."—Luke xxi. 25-26.

O, how terrifying shall be the signs, forerunners of the great day of the Lord! "The sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall not fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be moved."—Matt. xxiv. 29.

Listen, also, to St. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, who, illuminated by a divine light, saw in a vision what shall come to pass at the end of the world. Hear his own description: "The heavens," says he, "departed as a book folded up; and every mountain and the islands were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the tribunes, and the strong, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of mountains. And they say to the mountains: Fall upon us and hide us from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For 171 the great day of their wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"—Apoc. vi. 14-15-16-17.

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O day of wrath and tribulation! Day of distress and calamity! Day of sorrow and darkness! O dreadful day of universal death, be thou ever present in our minds, and we shall always keep our souls free from the stain of sin!

That tremendous day is called by St. Peter, “the day of the Lord.” It “shall come,” says he, “as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence, and the elements shall be melted with heat, and the earth and the works which are in it, shall be burnt up.” And a little farther he adds: “The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with burning heat.”—II Peter iii. 10, 12.

We may now conceive an idea of that day, in which lead, iron, copper, silver, gold and all the elements of the globe shall be melted by the intensity of the heat of the fire kindled by the wrath of a just God!

Great and most powerful God! what shall become of all the nations and tribes of the universe? They shall be treated like Sodom and Gomorrah; the whole earth shall be covered with raging flames; all living creatures shall be destroyed and reduced to ashes!

O men, let us be silent and reflect! On account of the sins of the world, the whole globe shall become a sea of fire, and afterwards a vast smoking desert! Then shall be accomplished the terrible sentence: “Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.”—Genesis iii. 19. Then kings and princes, freemen and slaves shall lie down upon the same bed, and sleep for a time in the arms of death! Then the angel shall sound the last trumpet, and these solemn words shall be heard by all the dead: Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.

At the same moment all the dead shall rise from their tombs, be invested again with their own flesh, and united together in the valley of Josaphat. “In a moment,” says St. Paul, “in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet, for the last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible.”—I Cor. xv. 52. “And they that have done 172 good,” says St.

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John, "shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation."—John v. 29.

Heathens and infidels may laugh at the dogma of the resurrection, and say: We cannot believe it, because we cannot understand how our bodies, once reduced into dust, shall be transformed into new ones that shall die no more. We may answer them, that, what is incomprehensible to man is not incomprehensible to God, nor above His power, because He is infinitely wise and infinitely powerful, as it is proclaimed by our own existence, and by the existence of all creatures.

As for us Christians, who believe in the resurrection of the body, let us often say to ourselves: He who has been powerful enough to create our bodies shall not want power to restore them to life at the last day; Jesus who gave life to His dead body, will restore to life ours according to His promise.

Yes, both the good and the wicked shall rise from the grave at the last trumpet! Yes, we all shall be invested again with our own flesh, and gathered to stand before the Sovereign Judge of the universe!

Behold, on a sudden the heavens shall be opened, and the Son of God shall come down upon earth with great power and majesty!

O, how different His second coming will be from the first! Then, He had no friend to receive Him in his house! Mary, His good mother, was rejected by every one in Bethlehem! She gave birth to the Son of God in a poor stable! The maker of the universe laid in a manger! There He suffered with cold and wept bitterly for our sins! And afterwards His whole life was spent in labor, penance, persecution, sufferings; and at last He was condemned to die upon the cross; and upon it He expired, despised, mocked and cursed by many of His enemies!

What a change at His second coming! Millions of millions of angels, His servants, shall come down from heaven with Him, to execute His order, and to be witness of His glory!

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When He shall appear every eye shall see Him, and all nations and tribes shall exclaim: Behold, He comes to render to every one according to his works.—Matt. xvi, 27.

The Judge having arrived sits upon the throne of His glory; His eyes are as a flame of fire; His face is shining like the sun; His head is crowned with many diadems; in His hands He holds the keys of heaven and of hell. Crowns most beautiful are ready for His elect; chastisements the most rigorous and excruciating are prepared for the reprobate. His angels stand by Him; and all the dead again full of life are before Him, awaiting the awful sentence. The consciences of all men are opened like books in which are recorded their actions. The works, the desires, the thoughts of every one are by the power of God manifested at the sight of all the angels and men.

Sinners, your blasphemies against God and His saints; your curses against your neighbors; your scandals and murders of souls; your impure thoughts, desires and actions; your avarice and envy; your ambition and pride; your slanders and calumnies; your thefts and extortions; your excesses in eating and drinking; the neglect of the duties of your state of life; all your iniquities shall be read from your souls as from a book; they will be as so many vipers of fire torment you forever!

Mountains, mountains, fall upon us and cover us! you then shall cry out, but in vain. Your shame will be upon your face forever, and your tortures shall have no end!

Ye just, friends of God, your good meditations and prayers; your love of God and charity towards your fellowmen; your sighs and tears at the scandal of the world; your fervor in the reception of the sacraments; your meekness and modesty; your patience in sufferings and resignation to the will of God; your love of chastity, your combats against your passions,

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the world and the temptations of the spirits of darkness; your exactness in fulfilling the obligations of your state of life; your continual care to avoid the occasion of sin; in fine, all your good actions will shine upon your heads brighter than the sun, and that forever! O delightful sight! O incomprehensible happiness!

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Let us now imagine that we are in the valley of Josophat; that we see Jesus sitting upon the throne of His majesty, and that before Him stand millions of millions of angels, who minister unto Him; on His right are the elect, on His left the reprobate. The heavens are opened and we see the beauty thereof.

O, what brightness! what splendor! what a beautiful city! O house of God, happy mansion of the elect, eternal abode of Jesus, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, at the sight of thee, the most charming things of the earth and firmament lose all their brilliancy and splendor; thrones ornamented with the brightest stars would not compare with the seats prepared for thy inhabitants!

All the elect inundated with joy!

Let us, also, suppose that the gates of the gates of the eternal abyss are thrown open, and that we see the places prepared for the reprobate—O dreadful torments! Who shall be able to dwell in those devouring flames? Who shall be able to dwell in everlasting burnings?—Isaias xxxiii. 14. Who shall be able to remain in that pool of fire and brimstone?—Apoc. xx. 9, 14, 15. What frightful companions the devils!

O mountains, mountains, fall upon us and destroy us! shall all the unfortunate sinners exclaim.

Sinners, be silent and listen to the sentence of the judge!

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Jesus, turning towards the just, says to them: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt.xxv. 34. Then, addressing Himself to the wicked, He says to them: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels."—Ibid, 41.

Keep in mind these words of Jesus Christ: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." As He would say to them: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, let the name of my Father be written upon your foreheads; you shall always be reckoned as His children; receive upon your heads the crown of glory, it is the price due to your victories over the world, the devil, and your evil inclinations; henceforth, you shall be a people of kings, your bodies shall shine like the 175 sun, as the reward due to your numerous trials and acts of penance; your souls shall be replenished with every kind of delights, as the recompense due to your obedience to my sacred laws. Rejoice, ye my elect, the days of grief and trial are over; my happiness will be your happiness; and I myself will be your eternal reward!—Gen. xv. 1.

Happy children of God, they shall be invested with the splendor of His glory; illuminated with His divine essence, they shall shine as so many suns in the Kingdom of their Father; they shall be in some respect like unto Him.—I John iii. 2. Inebriated with the plenty of His house and the torrent of His pleasures, they will sing His praises forever!

Bear in mind, also, the dreadful sentence pronounced against sinners: "Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels." As if the judge, the Son of God, would say to them: Since you have rebelled against me, and preferred your sinful actions to me, your God, your Redeemer, your sovereign good, depart from me with my curse, go into everlasting flames. There, you shall acquire a true knowledge of the justice of your creator, whose laws you have despised; there, you shall comprehend how much better it would have been for you to lose all your members, one by one (as did so many martyrs), rather than to renounce me, or rebel against my

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commandments; there, you shall understand these my words, announced to you by me, with my own lips when upon earth:

“And if thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into unquenchable fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished.

“And if thy foot scandalized thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter lame into life everlasting, than having tow feet, to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire:

“And if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out. It is better for thee with one eye to enter the kingdom of God, than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished.

“For everyone shall be salted with fire.”—Mark ix.

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Remember, O Christians, and never forget, that, as this sentence, “Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return,” is already fulfilled for millions of millions of the children of Adam, and shall have its entire accomplishment, so shall be accomplished to an iota, at the last day, the sentence of benediction or condemnation towards every one according to his works. The heavens and the earth shall pass away, but the words of Jesus Christ shall last forever.—Luke xxi. 33.

Hence, sinners shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting.—Matt. xxv. 46.

Where, then, shall be the glory of the world? How shall honors, riches and pleasures be esteemed? They shall be considered as a little dust. Why, then, be so much attached to vanities of so short duration?

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O, let us say to ourselves: We are all traveling towards eternity; or let us often repeat these words of Ecclesiastes: "Man shall go into the house of his eternity." Yes, every man shall go into the house of his eternity! Yes, I myself shall go into the house of my eternity! If I do violence to myself; if I resist the temptations of the enemies of my salvation; if I observe faithfully all the precepts of God and His Church; if I am, at all times ready to die, rather than to commit sin, I shall enter the house of my eternity with joy and gladness; and there, surrounded with light, I shall see God face to face without veil and forever; forever I shall be partaker of His glory; forever I shall minister unto Him and drink of the torrent of His pleasures and delights! Forever millions of millions of angels and saints will be my friends; I shall love them and they will love me; I shall rejoice at their happiness, and they will rejoice at mine; and we all together shall form one family, having but one mind, one spirit, one heart, one soul. What glory! what joy! what delights!

Let every one say, also, to himself: If I follow the bent of my evil inclinations; if I do not resist the temptations of the world, of the flesh, of the devil; if I do not comply with my duty and obligations; if I live in a state of sin, in a state of sin I shall die; and at the same moment I shall fall into 177 the house of my eternity. But what dreadful eternity will be mine! Cursed of God, plunged into the infernal abyss, without friend, without hope, what shall I do? Where shall I go? The prison being shut up by the hand of God, what power shall attempt to open it?

Who, reflecting on these great truths, will yet continue to commit sin? Who, in the state of sin, will not be terrified and cry out to God for mercy? Who, walking in the path of justice, will not sanctify himself more and more by the practice of all virtues?

I conclude this instruction by telling you in the name of God and your most important interest to think every day of the last judgment, and to reflect often on the words of the last sentence to the just: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared

for you from the foundation of the world;" and to sinners: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels." Amen.

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MISCELLANY.

**No. I Second Part of the Discourse of Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambrai, Delivered at the Consecration of Joseph Clement of Bavaria, Prince Elector of Cologne—
Subject: Humility, Patience and Prayer.**

We had read several times with edification the good lessons it contains. Many years ago we translated it from the French language into English. It is a rich, pious, solid and holy production on humility, patience and prayer. Any one reading it with attention and reflection will be inspired with love for these beautiful and capital virtues; and not a few of those who have read the life and the works of the great Archbishop of Cambrai, will say to themselves: He preached with a liberty all apostolic to the Prince-Elector of Cologne, the virtues which he had always practiced among his flock. The Christian and literary world unite together to this day in praising the excellent virtues and rare talents of Fenelon.

SECOND PART OF DISCOURSE OF FENELON ABOVE MENTIONED.

Princes who become pastors can be very useful to the Church, provided they devote themselves to the holy ministry with the spirit of humility, patience and prayer.

I. Humility, which is so necessary to all the ministries of the altar, is yet more necessary to those whose high birth 180 tempts them to exalt themselves above the rest of men. Hear Jesus Christ: "*I have come,*" says He, "not to be served, but to serve others."—Matt. xx. 28. Thus you see the Son of God, whom you will represent in the midst of His people, has not come to enjoy riches, to receive honors, to delight in pleasures, to exercise a wordly domination; on the contrary, He has come to abase Himself, to suffer, support the weak, heal the sick, wait for rebellious and indocile men, spread His favors over those who would

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do to Him the greatest evils, extend all day long His arms toward a people contradicting Him. Do you believe that the disciple is above the master? What Jesus Christ held as a simple ministry, would you use it for an ambitious domination? As Son of God He was the splendor of the glory of the Father and the character of His substance.—Heb. i. 5. As a man He counted among His ancestors all the kings of Judah who had reigned a thousand years, all the great sacrificators, all the patriarchs. While the most august families glorify themselves of not being able to discover their origin in the obscurity of old times, that of Jesus Christ showed clearly by the sacred books that His origin ascended to the source of the human race. This is a nobility to which no other under heaven could be compared. Jesus Christ, nevertheless, has come to serve even the lowest among men; He becomes the slave of all.

Why does Jesus Christ intrust to us His authority? Is it to content our pride in flattering that of other men? Is it for ourselves, or for the people over whom we exercise it? It is, on the contrary, to repress the pride and passions of men, in humbling ourselves and dying continually to ourselves. How could we make men love the cross, if we reject it to embrace human glory and voluptuousness? Who will believe the promises, if, when announcing them, we appear not to believe them? Who will renounce himself to love God, if we appear void of God and idolaters of ourselves? What will our words do, if all our actions contradict them? The words of eternal life in our mouth will be only a vain declamation, and the most holy ceremonies a deceitful spectacle. What! those men so much weighed down to the earth, so insensible 181 to heavenly gifts, so blind, so hard-hearted, will they listen to us when we will speak only of the cross and of death, if they do not discover in us any mark of Jesus Christ crucified?

I agree that the pastor should not degrade the prince; I demand also that the prince should not forget the humility of the pastor. Though you preserve a certain éclat which is inseparable from your dignity, you ought to be able to say with Esther: “Lord, thou knowest

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the necessity I lie under, that I abominate the sign of my pride and glory which is upon my head in the days of my public appearance, and detest it as a rag.”—Esth. xiv, 16.

You know that it is with regret that I am surrounded with such grandeur, and that I do all that I can to retrench all superfluity in order to give comfort to the people and relief to the poor.

Remember, also, that the temporal dignity is only given you on account of the spiritual. It is to empower the pastor of souls, that the electoral dignity has been added, in the empire, to that of the Archbishop of Cologne. It is to facilitate to him the pastoral functions and to strengthen the Catholic Church, that has been attached to his ministry of humility that illustrious charge. Besides, these two functions are reunited in a certain point. Pagans, themselves, have no idea more noble of a prince, than that of *pastor of the people*. Behold you are pastor of the people by a double title, as prince, and more so as minister of Jesus Christ.

But how could you be the pastor of the people, if your grandeur would separate you from them, and render you inaccessible to their regard? How could you lead the flock if you were not attentive to their wants? If the people can never see you, but far off from a distance, ever great, ever surrounded with what smothers confidence, how shall they dare to pass through the crowd in order to cast themselves into your arms, to tell you their afflictions, and find in you their consolation? How can you make them feel a father's heart, if you show them only a master? This is what the prince must not forget. Let us add what the apostolic man's sentiments ought to be.

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If you never descend from your grandeur, how could you say with Jesus Christ: “Come to me all you that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you.”—Math. xi. 28. How could you add: “Learn of me, that I am meek and humble of heart.”—Math. xi. 29. Will you be the father of the little ones, be yourself a little one, become little to proportion yourself to them.

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"If I know you well," said St. Bernard to Pope Eugenius, "you shall be no less poor in spirit by becoming the father of the poor."— *De Consider. Prolog.* Your riches does not belong to you. The founders did not strip their families but only in favor of the poor. They are intrusted to you to give relief to the poverty of your children.

But let us continue to listen to St. Bernard, speaking to the vicar of Jesus Christ: "What has St. Peter left to you by succession? He could not give you what he had not; he has given you what he had, viz., the solicitude over all the churches. *** This is the apostolic form: Domination is forbidden, servitude is recommended."—Ibid. lib. 11, cap. vi. n. 10, p. 419.

Come then, O Prince, to accomplish the prophecies in favor of the Church. Come to "kiss the dust of her feet; never disdain to consider any bishop as you brother. Reckon the holy priests as your coadjutors in Jesus Christ; receive their counsels; profit by their experience; cherish even poor clerics who are the hope of the house of God; help the laborers who bear the weight and the heat of the day; console all those in whom you find a spark of the spirit of grace. O, you that descend from so many princes, kings and emperors, forget the house of your father" (Ps. xxiv. 11); say to all those ancestors: I ignore you. If any one find that the tenderness and humility of pastor are unworthy of your birth and dignity, answer him, as did David, when contemned for having danced before the ark: "I will make myself meaner than I have done; and I will be little in my own eyes"—II Reg. vi. 22. Descend to the last sheep of your flock; nothing can be too low in a ministry that is above man. Descend then, descend; fear not, you could not descend too low to imitate the *Prince of pastors* (I Peter v. 4) who, 183 being without usurpation equal to the Father annihilated Himself, taking the nature of slave—Philip. ii. 6-7. If the spirit of faith makes you thus descend, your humility will be the joy of heaven and earth.

II. What patience is not requisite in this ministry! The minister of Jesus Christ is debtor to all, the wise and to the unwise. It is an immense debt, which is renewed every day, and is never extinguished. The more he does, the more he finds to be done, "and no one," says St. Chrysostom, "but he that does nothing, flatters himself of having done everything."

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Solomon, at the sight of the people under his charge, cried to God: "Thy servant is in the midst of the people, which thou hast chosen; an immense people, which cannot be numbered nor counted for the multitude. Give, therefore, to thy servant a heart docile that he may judge thy people."—III Reg. iii. 8-9. The scripture adds that this discourse pleased God. It will please Him also from your own mouth. But what! Is not docility the part of inferiors? Does not reason seem to ask that the pastor should have wisdom and the people docility? No; the pastor is in a greater need of docility than the flock; no doubt, in order to obey well, a person ought to be docile. But it is necessary to be yet more docile, in order to command well. The wisdom of man is found only in docility. In order to teach he must learn without ceasing. Not only must he learn of God, listening to Him in silence, in his soul, according to these words:

"I will hear what the Lord will speak to me" (Ps. lxxxiv.9); but he ought also instruct himself by listening to men. "The bishop," says St. Cyprian, "must not only teach, but he must learn also, for whose knowledge increases every day, and who makes progress in learning things most perfect, teaches much better."

The bishop must not only study without ceasing the Holy Scriptures, tradition and discipline of the canons, but he ought, also, to listen to all those who wish to speak to him. Truth is found only in searching into it with patience. Woe to the presumptuous man, who flatters himself so much as to believe that he penetrates into it at once. He ought no less to distrust his prejudices than the disguises of the 184 parties. He must fear to deceive himself, easily believe that he deceives himself, and never be ashamed to confess that he has been deceived. Elevation, far from protecting against deception, is precisely what exposes the most to it. For the more elevated a person is, greater is the attraction that excites the avidity, the ambition, the flattery of deceivers. To despise the counsel of others, it is to bear the most temerarious of all counsels in ourselves. Not to feel our need, it is to be left without resources. Quite the contrary, the wise man increases his wisdom with all that he gathers from others. He learns of all to instruct all; he shows himself superior to all and to himself by such simplicity. He would go to the extremity of the earth to seek for a

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faithful and disinterested friend that would have courage enough to show him his faults. He is not ignorant that inferiors know much better the details than he, because they have them nearer, and they are less disguised to them. ***

The true pastor does not limit himself to any particular conduct. He is meek, he is rigid; he threatens, he encourages; he hopes, he fears; he corrects, he consoles; he becomes Jew with the Jews for legal observances; he is with those who are under the law as if he was himself under it; he becomes weak with the weak; he makes himself all to all, to gain them all to Jesus Christ—I Cor. ix. 20-21.

O happy weakness of the pastor, who, on set purpose, by condescension, proportions himself to souls that need strength. "Who is weak," says the Apostle, "and I am not weak? Who is scandalized and I am not on fire?"—II Cor. xi. 29. O pastors, far from you a narrow heart! Let your love become stronger and stronger! You know nothing if you know only how to command, to reprimand, to correct, to show the letter of the law. Be fathers; it is not enough, be mothers. "We became little ones in the midst of you," says St. Paul, "or as a mother caressing her little ones, when nursing them"—I Thessal. ii. 7. Wait without ceasing, O pastor of Israel; hope against hope; imitate the longanimity of God for sinners. Bear patiently what God himself is willing to bear. "Reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience"—II Timothy iv. 2. It shall be given you according to the ardor 185 of your faith. Do you doubt that stones themselves may be changed at last into children of Abraham. ***

Correction resembles certain remedies which are compounded with some poison; they are not to be used, but in the extremity, after having been tempered with much precaution. Correction revolts secretly the last rest of pride, it leaves in the heart a secret wound which is easily envenomed. The good pastor prefers as much as possible a sweet insinuation; he adds to it the example, patience, prayer, fatherly cares—V. S. *Aug., Expos. Epist. and Gal.*, n. 56, tom. III, page 2. Love does not penetrate the heart by compulsion. Every one loves only so much as he wishes to love. It is easier to reprimand than to persuade; it is shorter to threaten than to instruct; it is more commodious to highness and human

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impatience to strike on those who resist, than to edify the, than to die to itself. So soon as we find some miscount in the heart, ever one is tempted to say to Jesus Christ: "Lore, with thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume those indocile sinners?" But Jesus Christ answers: "You know not of what spirit you are"—Luke ix. 54-55. He rebukes their indiscreet zeal.

III. But where can a man clothed with mortal flesh and surrounded with infirmity receive so many heavenly virtues as to be the angel of God upon earth? Know that God is rich for all those who invoke Him.—Rom. x. 12. He recommends us to pray, lest that by neglecting to pray, we lose the favors that He has prepared for us. He promises, He invites, He prays us, so to speak, to pray to Him. A great love, it is true, is requisite to feed a large flock; it is almost necessary to be no more a man to merit to be the guide of men; in him should no more appear human weakness. It is only after having said to you three times as to St. Peter: "Dost thou love me?" After having drawn three times out of your heart this answers: "O Lord, thou knowest that I love thee" (John xxi. 15-17), that the Great Shepherd says to you: "Feed my lambs." But he who asks a love so courageous and so patient, is himself the same that gives it to us. Come, make haste, buy it without money—Is. lv. 1 186 It is bought by the simple desire; no one is deprived of it, except him who is not willing. O infinite good, it is sufficient to desire it, in order to possess it! This is the pure and burning gold, the treasure of the poor heart, which extinguished all desire and fills up all needs. Love gives all, and love is given to every one opening his heart to it. But see the order of the things of God, and beware to overthrow it. Grace alone can give it, and grace is given only to prayer. Pray, then, without ceasing—I Thess. v. 17. If all the faithful ought thus to pray, what of the pastor! you are the mediator between heaven and earth; pray to help those who pray, uniting your prayers to theirs; nay, pray for those who do not pray. Speak to God in favor of those to whom you would not dare to speak of God, when you see their hearts hardened and irritated against virtue. Be as Moses, the friend of God; go far from the people on the mountain to converse familiarly with God face to face (Exod. xxxiii. 11); return to the people crowned with the rays of glory, which that ineffable entertainments

shall put around in your head. Let mental prayer be the source of your light in your works; you have not only to convert sinners but you must also direct the most perfect souls in the ways of God; you must announce wisdom among the perfect—I Cor. ii. 6. You must be their guide in mental prayer, to guard them against the illusions of self-love. Be the, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the eye which enlightens the body of your Church, and the mouth which pronounces the oracles of traditions.

O, who will give me that spirit of prayer, which is all powerful on God Himself! O, spirit of prayer, it is thou that shalt form new apostles to change the face of the earth. O spirit, O love, come to animate us, come to teach us how to pray; pray in us; come, love thyself in us. To pray without ceasing; to love God and to make Him loved, it is the life of the apostleship. Live this hidden life with Jesus Christ, in God, O Prince, pastor of souls, and “you shall taste how sweet is the Lord.”—P. xxxiii. 6. Then you will be a column in the house of God; then you shall be the love and the delight of the Church.

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Great princes who take, so to say, the Church, without giving themselves to her, are a heavy burden and no support to her. Alas, what do they cost Church! They do not feed the flock, but it is with the flock they feed themselves. The price of the sins of the people; the sacred gifts are not sufficient to their pageantry and ambition. What does not the Church suffer by them? What wounds do they not make to her discipline? All the canons must fall before them, all gives way under their grandeur. Dispensations they abuse, and teach others to enervate the holy laws. They blush to be pastors and fathers, and wish to be only princess and masters.

It will not be so with you, since you put your glory in your pastoral functions. How greater over men is the authority of good example given by a bishop who is a great prince, than that given by a bishop of mediocre nobility! How much more fit is his humility to check the proud! How much more touching is his modesty to repress pomp and vanity! How much more amiable is his sweetness! How much stronger is his patience to recall men indocile

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and misled! Who will not feel ashamed of being haughty and irritated when he will see the prince, surrounded with power, meek and humble of heart! What will be the strength of his word, when supported by his virtues!***

People, for the happiness of whom this consecration is made, may my weak voice be heard afar off by you! Pray, people, pray; all the blessings you will bring upon him shall return upon you; more graces he will receive, more graces he will shed upon his flock.

And you here present who listen to me, never forget what you see on this day; remember his modesty.

You see, my brethren, this prince prostrate at the feet of the altar; you have heard all I have said to him. Eh! what did I not say to him, since he feared only to ignore the truth? The greatest praise would praise him infinitely less than the episcopal liberty with which he wishes me to speak to him. O, how great is a price when he gives such liberty! How far above vain praises he will appear when they will know all he desires me to tell him!

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And you, O Prince, on whom flows the unction of the Holy Ghost, resuscitate without ceasing the imposition of my hands. Let this great day rule all the days of your life till that of your death. Be always the good shepherd, ready to give your life for your dear sheep as you wish to be on this day, and as you would like to have been at the moment, when divested of all earthly greatness, you shall go to render an account to God of your ministry. Pray, love God, make Him loved, render Him amiable in yourself; shed afar off the good odour of Jesus Christ. Be the strength, the light, the consolation of your flock; let your flock be your joy and crown on the day of Jesus Christ!

O God, you have loved him from all eternity; you wish him to be yours, and to make you loved here below. Bear him in your bosom in the midst of perils and temptations. Let not the fascination of the amusements of the world darken the favors that you have put in his heart; do not suffer him too trust in his high birth, in his courage, in human prudence. Let

faith alone do in him the work of faith, that when he will go to appear before you, the poor fed, the rich humbled, the ignorant instructed, abuses reformed, discipline re-established, the Church supported and consoled by his virtues, present him before the throne of grace, to receive from your hands the crown that shall never fade. Amen.

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No. II. * DISCOURSE ON THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST. Before Jesus came upon Earth, almost all Nations walked in Darkness and in the Shadow of Death, and Crime Reigned Supreme—Jesus is the Light and the True Life of this World—He is the Son of God made Man to Redeem Us to Save Us, and to make Us Partakers of His Eternal Glory—We must Love Him.

* Many years ago this discourse was translated from the French into English by Father A. Ravoux. It was written by his brother, who was also his godfather and a priest. He died in France about forty years ago. *Requiescat in pace!*

“I will lead the blind into the way which they know not: and in the paths which they are ignorant of, I will make them walk. I will make darkness light before them.”—Isaias v. 16.

The thought of our Saviour's birth, though very consoling to the children of Adam, has, however, awakened in my mind sad reminiscences, in bringing me back to the epoch, when the Lamb, Redeemer of the world, was born in the stable of Bethlehem. A dark and bloody page of the history of nations appeared before me; and I saw ignorance spread over the whole surface of the earth, and terror reigning supreme everywhere. I saw the people and the philosopher guided only by the light of a weak and degraded reason, wandering in the vanity of their wisdom, and getting out of an abyss, but to plunge into a deeper one. I saw all nations almost deprived of all true knowledge, covered with a lugubrious veil, as impenetrable as the dark night, which, of old, frightened the land of Egypt. And then, overwhelmed with grief, I said to myself: The human intellect is very feeble; it is almost powerless.

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Then, again, appeared to me another scene no less afflicting; it was man given up to his brutal passions, acknowledging no law, but mere force; no duty, if not imposed upon him by his weakness; it was man under a despotic power thirsting after blood, prostrating himself before vain idols, offering in holocaust the murder of his brothers upon altars consecrated to cruel Deities; it was Polytheism with all its abominations, its hideous worship, its black vengeance, its wars of extermination.

Such a dreadful spectacle made me feel as if the intellectual and moral world was expiring; and my soul became more and more oppressed with bitterness.

My grief, however, did not last long; for, all at once, a sweet voice from the manger of Bethlehem whispered to my afflicted soul these divine words: O, thou who art overwhelmed with grief, cease to be alarmed; hope and fear no more; I, myself, will lead the blind into the way which they know not, and in the paths they are ignorant of I will make them walk; I will dispel that thick darkness; oppressed hearts I will reanimate.

These divine words comforted me, and instilled into my soul a calm and sweet peace.

In two words, the little Child born in the stable of Bethlehem is the source of all light, and of all love. He comes down from heaven to enlighten our intellects, and to rekindle the flames of charity extinguished in our hearts by self-love and egotism. This is all the subject of this instruction.

Many centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ, one of those men, whose mind, illuminated by the Holy Ghost, beheld future events, exclaimed in the midst of the people of Israel: "There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him. *** Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened.—Isaias xi. 1, xxxv. 5.

This solemn prophecy is fulfilled; the flower so much admired by Isaias, has blossomed, and it shall never lose its beauty; the vivifying light has begun to shine, and its brightness

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shall dispel all darkness from the minds of all men of good will; the Redeemer promised to the nations, sitting in 191 the shadow of death, has appeared in this world; the stable of Bethlehem is His palace, the manger His throne. Though reduced to such a state of poverty, humiliation and suffering, He, alone, is the sun of our intellects; He, alone, can say to all those who wander in the path of ignorance and error: I am your guide; I am the truth, pure and without cloud; come to me all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. I will enlighten your minds and give peace to your hearts. For the little Child born in the crib of Bethlehem is the incarnate word of God, His interior expression manifesting Himself to the world; He is the light, source of all light; He has come down from the bosom of His Father, to deliver us from all our evils.

And first in the stable of Bethlehem, I see springing up a vivifying light, revealing to my sight the splendor of the Deity. For the Child, lying down in the crib, is for me a faithful mirror on which are reflected the supreme Power, the incorruptible Justice, the ineffable Bounty, and the infinite Wisdom of my God.

Divine Power shineth in the mystery of this day, for all is wonder around the cradle of the Child born in the stable of Bethlehem. If His palace is poverty itself, His mother is a virgin always pure, always intact before as after His birth. If He is wrapt up in swaddling clothes, I have but to raise up my eyes to heaven, and I see the angel of the Lord, announcing the arrival in this world of the King of all glory, bringing us peace and happiness; I see the brilliant star foretold by Balaam; I perceive also in Judea shepherds invited by heaven, leaving their flocks and prostrating themselves before the manger, to acknowledge the Child of Bethlehem, as the Messias so long expected by the people of Israel. And yet a short time, and the kings of the East will come to adore Him, and lay down their crowns at His feet; and even the day is not far off, when the multitudes of tribes and nations will acknowledge His sovereign Power, and implore His infinite Mercy.

How great are these miracles! how great is the manifestation of the Deity! But what is yet more wonderful is to contemplate the Son of God made man, made flesh, laid in 192 a

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manger, exposed to pains and sufferings! What are all the other miracles, when compared with the spectacle of a God annihilated!

But why is the Son of God reduced to such a state of suffering and annihilation? Christians, listen to me and you will perceive the manifestation of the incorruptible Justice, of the profound Wisdom, and of the unlimited Bounty of God.

A crime had been committed; disorder introduced in the world had excited the wrath of heaven; the glory of God had been outraged, His justice asked chastisement against the guilty, but His mercy was inclined to pardon; forgiveness without any reparation for the offense was not according to the plan of divine wisdom. Hence, the necessity of a victim to be offered as an expiation of the crime.

Who shall be the victim? A man? But the merits of the most perfect amongst men could not be a sufficient compensation for the injury done to God.

An angel, enriched with all the treasures of divine mercy? But, being like men, creatures, angels are of themselves, of their own nature, very poor before God, and their expiatory works being limited, cannot fill up the immense abyss, separating the guilty creature from his Creator. The price to be offered ought to be equal to the gravity of the offense, an infinite price, a victim of an infinite value was required to cancel the decree of our condemnation.

Behold, now, the Wisdom and Mercy of God! It raises up a Mediator, who, possessing in Himself, in His own person, the nature of the offended Deity, and that of the ungrateful transgressor of the law, places Himself between the Judge and the guilty, to discharge by His voluntary expiation the debt contracted by the unfortunate transgressor.

This Mediator is the Son of God Himself, made man, made flesh, weeping, suffering for us in the crib of Bethlehem. In Him I admire eternal Wisdom disposing everything, divine

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Justice having its course, and infinite Mercy abolishing the decree of eternal death against the children of Adam.

O Wisdom! O Justice! O Bounty! O Power of my God, my soul is all raptured with admiration in the contemplation of Thy wonderful and incomprehensible works!

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God's attributes are, therefore, most wonderfully manifested to us by the incarnation and birth of Jesus Christ.

The contemplation of the Son of God made man, and born in the crib, shedding tears, suffering, accepting a life of labor and penance, to be consummated on the cross, will also reveal to our soul the depth of our fall, the greatness and elevation of our nature, redeemed by a victim of an infinite value. And then, without fear of error, we shall exclaim: Behold man! behold him better known by the mystery of the incarnation and birth of our Saviour, than by all the lessons of the philosophers!

“O, praise the Lord ye nations, praise Him, all ye peoples.”—Ps. cxvi.

We have a Redeemer in whom resides substantially the Deity itself; let us adore Him, and listen to His voice! Let, henceforward, all the oracles of false Deities be silent!

To Thee alone, O most amiable Jesus, I will ask lessons of wisdom! to Thee alone I will ask the knowledge of all the truths necessary to my eternal salvation! Yes, it is from Thee alone we can receive the divine light to dispel all darkness from our minds, and direct our steps in the path of heaven; to Thy sacred heart, all burning with love for us, we shall have daily recourse to rekindle in our frozen hearts the fire of divine love! But this ought to be the subject of a second consideration.

The stable of Bethlehem is the humble temple inhabited by the God of all glory; the crib is the venerable altar on which justice and mercy meet, kiss one another and re-establish

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peace and reconciliation. The stable is the temple, the crib the altar, whence arises a furnace of divine fire to reconquer our rebellious hearts.

In fact, if we were told that the son of a most powerful prince, in presence of whom prostrate themselves all the monarchs of the earth, has come down from his throne on which he sat, at the right hand of his father, partaking with him his supreme power and the sincere homages of his good and faithful subjects; if we were told that this prince sympathizing with the distress and misfortune of all his people, willingly exiled himself from the midst of his brilliant court 194 and went to a very far country to console unfortunate rebels, banished, exiled and left without hope, such a relation would excite our admiration and make us exclaim: Yes, that prince is the friend and the father of all his people. But were we informed that after his arrival among the rebels, he divested himself of his titles in order not to frighten them by the splendor of his power; that he treated them as his equals and enriched them with the most precious gifts in order to gain the affections of their hearts and bring them back more easily in the path of duty, obedience, and happiness; were we told that for them he delivered himself up to the severe justice of his father, irritated by their rebellion, O! then, no doubt, the excess of a love so pure, so disinterested, so liberal, so generous, would excite our greatest admiration; our intellect could not understand it and our tongue would stop speechless, unable to find expressions of praise worthy of such an action, of such a devotedness.

That prince, whose heart is inflamed with so great a love for his people, is not an imaginary one. He is realized in the crib of Bethlehem; for that little child, manifested to us, is the Son of God, who has come down from heaven to be our victim, and to lead us in the kingdom of eternal and perfect felicity.

From the throne of His glory, He saw the earth covered with evils, nations lying down in the shadow of death. He saw the old serpent, who in the beginning, deceived our first parents in the earthly paradise, always full of wrath continuing everywhere his works of malice and destruction. He saw Lucifer and his angels, like roaring lions, going about,

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surrounding the children of Adam, to make new victims for his kingdom. He saw those infernal monsters taking no rest, day or night, casting their firey and poisonous darts to blind more and more the children of Adam, and lead them in the broad way of all crimes and eternal perdition. And His heart was moved with compassion.

He beheld, also, upon earth a few just souls shedding tears and crying to God with Isaias: "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just; let the earth be opened and bud forth a Saviour." Their fervent prayer touched Him more and more with compassion, and inflamed His desire of becoming man, suffering, and dying for our redemption.

"O, praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples. For His mercy is confirmed upon us."—Ps.cxvi.

The eternal Father, having accepted the sacrifice of His Son, gives Him to us for our reconciliation with His divine Justice. "God so loved the world," says St. John, "as to give His only Son."—St. John xi.40.

Who shall ever be able to comprehend the infinite love of God for this world? Who shall ever be able understand the infinite love of His Son for us poor sinners?

O wonder above all wonders, the Son of God leaves the splendor of heaven, clothes Himself with our own nature in the womb of a virgin, and after nine months' confinement we see Him born in the stable of Bethlehem!

"O, praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples. For mercy is confirmed upon us."

Let us go in mind into the stable of Bethlehem, contemplate, admire and adore our Emmanuel (God with us)! See how much He loves us! He is pleased to be our victim and our redeemer, cost what it will! Burning with love for us He is ready, He is most

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willing to begin His penitential life, which shall continue to be a sacrifice to the very moment of His death upon the cross. All the labors, sufferings and torments of His whole lifetime are present to His mind; He accepts them all, in order to cancel the decree of our condemnation. "He was offered," says the prophet Isaias, "because it was His own will."—
liii. 7.

O, let us repeat with the Church: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him, who takes away the sins of the world!" Behold His kindness and infinite love; He has come to dwell among us; to sympathize with us in all the evils of this life; He has come to cover Himself with the leprosy of our sins; to pay the price of our redemption by His voluntary humiliation and sufferings; to destroy the power of Satan, and replenish our souls with supernatural gifts of an infinite value!

What has He left undone, that He could do for us? To 196 Him we are indebted for all good gifts and heavenly blessings. For, through His mediatorship, we can call God our Father; we can invoke Him as the best of fathers, fully confident that He will listen to our prayers and protect us against all our enemies.

The Child of the crib is also the Author of the sacraments, fountains of life and happiness to the Christian people. He is the Author of the sacraments, instituted to reconcile us with God; to bless us at our entrance into this life; to fortify us after our first steps in this world; to heal the wounds of our souls, when fallen into the abyss of sin; to enrich us with temporal and eternal gifts during the course of our life; to give us strength and consolation when our last hour shall have come. The Child of the manger is the source of all graces. The manger is the cradle of Christianity, whence is springing up a torrent of divine blessings over the whole world. The Child of the manger is all love. When I contemplate Him reduced to such a state of annihilation for us, it seems to me that I see His heart melting with the fire of divine charity, and flowing by infusion into our own hearts. Yes, our Saviour is all love, all charity for us, poor sinners!

Now what shall we do in return for so many favors? What does our Saviour ask of us? Nothing more, nothing less than all the affections of our hearts. Hear His voice: "I am come to cast fire on earth, and what will I do, but that it be kindled."—Luke xii. 49. If He has reduced Himself to such a state of poverty and humiliation, it is to captivate our love. "I am come to cast fire on earth, and what will I do, but that it be kindled." If He covers Himself with the leprosy of our sins, it is to influence our hearts with deep feelings of gratitude. "I am come to cast fire on earth, and what will I do, but that it be kindled." If He annihilates Himself and is willing to suffer and die for us, it is to kindle in our souls that divine fire, which afterwards caused St. Paul to explain: "Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or persecution, or the sword? *** I am sure that neither death, nor life, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, in our Lord."—Romans viii. 35.

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These ought to be our sentiments. But O ingratitude, in presence of the little child of the crib, burning with love for all men, the hearts of many sinners remain indifferent, cold, frozen, and nothing is capable of kindling in them the fire of divine love. He invites them all to Him, and they flee away far from His divine influence; He sacrifices Himself to render them happy, and they reject His love to follow their evil inclinations. O insensibility! O blindness! O folly!

Let us go in mind to the little Child of Bethlehem; let us adore Him, and remember that He is the Saviour of all men of good will!

Before concluding this instruction, let me invite you to unite your voices to those of the angels of God, and exclaim with them: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to men of good will."

Glory to God the Father, who so loved the world as to give His only Son for our redemption! Glory to God the Son, who through love for us has taken our own nature (a

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body and soul like ours), in order to break asunder our chains and bestow upon us all blessings! Glory to the Holy Ghost, the spirit of love, who has loved us with an infinite love, through the operation of whom the Son of God was incarnated in the womb of Mary, the beloved daughter of heaven and earth!

Glory to the most Holy Trinity, who, more than fully satisfied of the price paid by the Lamb of God for the sins of the world, has destroyed the wall of separation between heaven and earth!

Glory to God, the war which lasted four thousand years, is over; the gates of heaven are thrown open; millions of angels have come down in this vale of tears, to announce to us the happy event! Raptured in admiration, in beholding the little Child born in the crib of Bethlehem, whom they know to be their Creator, their Master, their God, they adore Him with the most profound respect; and full of joy in the contemplation of the infinite Mercy of God incarnated for our salvation, they exclaim again and again: "Glory to God, and peace to men of good will."

Let the whole world, to-day, resound with these consoling words: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to men of good will."

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Peace to you, who docile to the voice of the holy angels, have washed your immortal souls in the blood of the Lamb of God! Peace to you, who, with a pure conscience, have received the sacrament of His love! Peace to you, who living in the state of sanctifying grace would prefer rather to die than to offend God! Peace to you, because you are the true children of God, because you are partakers of the divine nature, because you are the brothers of Christ, the heirs of heaven, and co-heirs with Christ, because by every action you perform to please God, you acquire a new degree of eternal glory! Peace to you, all men of good will, faithful observers of the will of God; God Himself will be your eternal reward.

But what shall I say to those, who, unwilling to renounce their evil passions, cannot receive the blessings of our most beloved Redeemer! Woe to them! Woe to them even in this life, for there is no peace for the obstinate sinner! Woe to them, for, after this short life, they shall be plunged into everlasting torments!

O good Jesus, let Thy divine light enlighten their minds, touch and change their hearts, that they may be converted, and that we may be all together received in Thy kingdom to bless Thee forever! Amen.

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No. III. * DISCOURSE ON ROMANCES. Romances Ruin the Mind, the Intellect, and Corrupt the Hearts of Those who Read Them—They are Dangerous to Morals and have Brought Multitudes to Perdition.

* Many years this discourse was translated from the French into English by Father A. Ravoux. It was written by his brother, who was also his godfather and a priest. He died on France about forty years ago. Requiescat in peace!

“He that loveth danger shall perish in it.”—Eccles. iii. 27.

The author of this most important lesson had, no doubt, a perfect knowledge of the human heart and its fragility. The truth of his words is but too often verified by the repeated falls of those, who, confident in their own strength, throw themselves in the midst of dangers, wherein they receive almost always deadly wounds. Flight from the danger of sin is the only means of salvation. Cowardice, which, in other circumstances is considered as a weakness of the soul, becomes on this occasion an essential virtue. We ought to flee, and to flee speedily from the danger of sin.

Now, among the many dangers surrounding youth, there is perhaps none more to be dreaded than the reading of romances. Though they were not forbidden to our curiosity by religion, natural law and the interest of our salvation would most strictly prohibits them:

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First, because the perusal of these books is dangerous.

Secondly, because very often it produces the most frightful effects.

This is the division of this discourse, and the object of your attention.

Nothing can better make us understand the imminent danger of reading romances than the evil impressions they generally leave in the heart of youth, and even of old people. Romances give only relish for frivolous things, weaken and disable the soul for serious occupations and the fulfillment of its duties; they enfeeble and enervate it, taking away that rigidity of principles and manners so necessary to preserve us in the path of virtue; they excite a certain vague sensibility and desire for objects they had before despised and rejected; they inspire sentiments falsely heroic; they have passages most critical to virtue; description or expressions, which, though chaste in appearance, convey unchaste ideas; lively and striking images apt to disturb and disorder the imagination and reason, not even so much by what is described as by what is left under a certain veil to pique one's curiosity; simple and natural descriptions bringing slowly vice into the soul, and fire into the veins. It would be preposterous to flatter and deceive one's self on the evil effects of the perusal of such books, no matter by whom written, by men of talent or not, they most often, not to say always, cause secret disturbances in the mind, secret emotions, which are ordinarily the prelude to shameful falls. What else shall I say? They depict vice with agreeable colors, which disguise its honor; they efface by the brilliant coloring of false virtues the beauty of real ones; they praise a chimerical honor in the place of the true one, which they turn into contempt. The more they endeavor to show delicacy in the passions, the more they deceive. What else shall I add? They describe in glowing language the refinement of taste and worldly pleasures in cities, the apparel of luxury, of shameful tableau, of manners yet more unbecoming; in fine, they proclaim the epicurean doctrine. These are the lessons they inculcate. O, how easily seduced and deceived is a soul all fresh, and without experience! And if sometimes the reading of such books does not immediately produce such pernicious effects, at least it prepares the way; if it is not

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presently followed by defeats and falls, it conveys into the heart a secret disposition, which sooner or later shall cause its ruin.

Young man, who findest so much attraction in the reading of romances, answer me: Dost thou discover in them Christian morality? Is it in the school of the world and of the passions thou expectest to acquire the knowledge of virtue? or rather at the foot of the cross, in the gospel of Jesus Christ crucified for all men? What relation, or rather what contrast between romances and the morality of our sacred writings! There is not a greater difference between light and darkness than that existing between the spirit of romances and the spirit which ought to animate the disciples of Christ. To crucify our flesh with our vices and concupiscences, is according to the spirit of the Christian religion; to nourish in our souls an attachment to the world and its disorders is, if not the object, at least the fruit of the reading of such books.

Now, what can be more dangerous to our immortal souls? Bad discourses corrupt good morals; such is the doctrine of the Apostle of nations. Immoral conversation is strictly forbidden, no one will dare to deny it. And I maintain that the reading of romances is more dangerous than immoral conversation, because it makes deeper impressions on the mind. Evil impressions produced by conversation do not last so long, on account of the change of subject, which brings the thought to other objects. But the reading of immoral books draws the whole attention, penetrates the mind and the heart, fills the whole soul with immodest imaginations. Romances are read to satisfy curiosity and other passions difficult to be controlled; they are perused full hours with pleasure; and often, when the heart is open to objects, very dangerous; when the soul is unguarded and susceptible of whatever may flatter its propensity. Then impressions become more lively, more agreeable, deeper and more ineffaceable. Besides, in a conversation you often see a person blush when unchaste expressions are uttered; the presence of others inspires us with some respect and restraint. But no one taking pleasure in the reading of immoral books will blush when filling up his mind and heart with such a food, however impure it may be. Being alone, he is taking no precaution, vice is unveiled with full liberty, without shame, without fear. Nay,

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in a book, 202 characters are painted with art, they are more lively, more penetrating; the discourse is sweeter and better composed; narrations are more natural; in fine, everything stands in a better light; it is better conducted, and better arranged, than the most attracting conversation.

If I open the history of profane antiquity, I will find new proofs to establish the danger of reading immoral books; proofs most convincing, for they come from men having for their sole guide mere reason, often weak and corrupted. In their annals I see they have proscribed from their republics and withdrawn from the hands of youth such books as being more apt to corrupt the heart than to polish the mind.

Hence, the Church of God, having no less at heart the purity of morals than that of faith, has, at all times, done all in her power to deter her children from the perusal of all immoral books. In her very first council, according to the historian Nicephorus, she pronounced the sentence of anathema against a book, the style of which was effeminate and immoral.

But if the danger does not terrify you, let us see its dreadful effects.

Most pernicious is the reading of romances; because it perverts the judgment, corrupts good inclinations, and causes the ruin of innumerable souls. A few illustrations on this subject will make us understand well the great danger of such books.

St. Teresa, who by reading the lives of the saints and martyrs, had so much imbibed in her soul the spirit of God, that, when yet a child, she left her father's house in order to find a place where she could gain the crown of martyrdom. Teresa, who, though yet so young, already a martyr by desire, but unsuccessful in her project of dying for Jesus Christ, continued to be an angel of piety until she began to read romances, is a powerful example of the evil effects caused by the perusal of such books. "The reading of these books began," says she, "to cool my good desires, and was the cause of my failing in other things. I fancied, however, there was no harm, though I spent many hours, both of the 203 day and of the night, in so vain an exercise, unknown to my father. But I was so addicted

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to this habit, that, if I could not obtain some new book, it seemed to me I could not be happy." Had she not been withdrawn from such a danger by a special grace of God, she should have perished, as you may be convinced of it by reading her life written by herself.

Another illustration, no less important, is that of St. Augustine, one of the greatest Doctors of the Church. In his youth, ere being a Christian, carried away by the desire of knowing everything, he reads indistinctly every book. Terrence's Comedies are for him full of charms; but the more he reads them the more the poison is infused into his mind and his heart; the fire of impure passions is kindled in his soul, and he finds himself plunged in the abyss of the most shameful depravity. Read the book of his confessions, and you will see how much he had to fight to get out of that abyss of corruption. Nay, he will tell you that there was no hope of salvation for him had not God by a miracle of His grace broken asunder his chains.

Hear, also, the lamentation of another, who, deceived by the desire of vain reputation, had written romances and offered them to the public. Touched by the grace of God and converted, he perceives the evils produced by his writings; he desires, but in vain, to put an end to the scandal, and repair the past. "Who will assure me," says he, "that my grief has touched the heart of God, whilst my writings continue to cause destruction. I publish retractions, but will they take the trouble of reading them; and will those who shall read them receive my advantage? What shall become of so many souls lost? What terrible state to see one's guilty and unable to repair the evil!"

I will yet expose to your sight new picture, which shall make deeper impressions on your minds. I represent not to myself a youth of this college, who at first dreaded the mere thought of crime as the first fits of the most dangerous disease; his countenance was shining with the spirit of piety; he was often seen in the church receiving the sacraments with fervor; he found his delight in reading good books, and fulfilling with exactitude all his duties, 204 both as a Christian and a student. The crown of victory has often encircled his brow; he was the glory of his teachers, and not seldom had he been proposed as a

model to his companions; in fine, in virtue and science he was the most accomplished youth of the college. Such a beginning gave us the greatest hope of a happy future; but vain expectation! A contagious breath rises and surrounds that young plant, it decays and fades away. An imprudence has become to that unfortunate youth a stumbling block against which is vanishing away all the fervor of his piety and virtue. He begins to take pleasure in feeding his mind with the reading of bad books. *** Unhappy youth, whither dost thou direct thy step? Behold the abyss open before thee! Be struck with horror and come back, if thou wilt not fall into it and perish forever! *** But in vain; his friends' advice is useless, he is blind and deaf, he has already swallowed up too much of impure water, he does not perceive the danger. He continues to feed his soul with the fruit of the forbidden tree, at the same time corruption is penetrating more deeply into his heart, and a subtle poison is infused into his veins. His good books have disappeared, and with them the rules retracing to him all his duties. Now, he feels but disgust for holy things, he has no more recourse to the fountain of all graces to purify his soul, and to receive strength against temptations. Religious instructions are for him a food insipid, unsavory, nauseous and disgusting. At last we see him plunged in the deepest abyss of corruption, and he who had been the pride and ornament of the college, he becomes the shame and opprobrium of it.

Ah! let me exclaim with Isaias: "The crown is fallen from our head; woe to us, because we have sinned."—Lam. v. 16.

Deplore, dear friends, his fatal destiny; fear the danger, and do not expose yourselves to it. For the young man we have portrayed is not a chimerical being; experience, now and then, gives us many similar examples and lessons. May our good God preserve every one of you from falling into such state of degradation!

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In spite of so frightful evils, some find pretexts to read romances; but let us see if they have any weight.

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They say, why forbid romances and allow the reading of history, which unveils also most shameful crimes? Does the young man, who is pleased to raise such an objection, know what is history? If, sometimes, it reveals shameful crimes, it is to brand them with infamy and to inspire us with sentiments of horror; if it shows corrupted men and depraved nations, it is to cover them with ignominy and to excite against them the contempt of mankind. Besides, I find in history a counter-poison unknown in romances. If in history I see crime, I see also most sublime of virtues admired by all wise men of past and present generations. Hence do not compare any more romances to history. Let us read history for our instruction, and let romances rot in the dust, or better yet, let them be reduced to ashes.

Some object again and say: We must learn how to speak well; and romances are almost the only books which can procure us such an advantage. Sophism of evil passions! Romances only teach us how to speak well! God be thanked, we are not reduced to the sad necessity of learning to do evil in order to learn how to speak! Our best writers have found the secret of joining eloquence to solidity; dry and barren subjects have received under their pen the most charming aspect. But were we to ignore forever our language, yet we could not be allowed to draw knowledge from impure sources, the waters of which, being poisoned, would cause death. We, however, deny romances the honor of teaching us to speak well. If by speaking well they understand to use in conversation hyperbolical expressions, yes, we must confess it, and do justice to romances, they have the advantage. But if to speak well, they mean to discourse with precision, discernment, solidity, with lively and natural expressions, friends of romances, humble yourselves, they will never give you such a knowledge.

Some others might yet say, if obscene books are forbidden, they ought, at least, to allow us works wherein there are only tender expressions. Religion ought to permit you the reading of books of tender expressions! My friends, 206 you have misunderstood me; my design was not to forbid you monstrous productions wherein the corruption of the

human heart has overflowed all limits. I suppose your education and your natural feelings are such as to inspire you with horror for books of that kind. The question is only about those you have spoken of; and I maintain that they are more dangerous than the others. Obscenity itself revolts and turns one's stomach; nature gives against it arms to every one who has not smothered its voice. But where the means to resist vice when it appears adorned with the ornaments of virtue, and embellished with all its charms, where find a soul vigorous enough to reject a poison so well prepared? This is the snare most seducing to innocence and the rock the most famous by shipwrecks.

Hence, anathema to romances! Woe to those who read them! Woe to those who lend them! Far from you those licentious writings produced by libertinism, the vogue and success of which are totally due to the dreadful merit of seducing and corrupting.

Ah! if any one amongst you had ever the misfortune of suffering any injury from the reading of romances let him beware not to proceed! A deep, very deep abyss is open before him! As to you, who have been so happy as to preserve your innocence, do not touch the forbidden fruit, it brings a germ full of deadly poison. Be not insensible to the interest of your salvation, and to the consideration of the eternal life which is to be the recompense of your fidelity!

REV. FATHER L. GALTIER.

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No. IV. On Modesty, by Rev. Father L. Galtier who in 1841 Built the First Chapel in St. Paul and Died in Prairie du Chien in 1866— Modesty is a Virtue by which the Exterior is Regulated with Decorum and Decency—By it everything should be Ruled in our Exterior; our Eyes, our Tongue, our Dress and Manners.

“Let your modesty be known to all men: the Lord is night.”—Phil.iv.5.

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Beloved Christians: —It is the sacred task of the ministers of God to teach the faithful all their duties, even when they might have some reason to fear that many are not well disposed to receive with gratitude all the truths of salvation. “Preach the word,” says St. Paul to his beloved disciple Timothy, “be instant in season, out of season, reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine.” No less positive is the precept of our Saviour Jesus Christ when He gives command to His Apostles and their successors, to go and teach all nations, “Teaching them,” says He, “to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you, all days, even to the consummation of the world.”

Were we only to please men of the world, we should never say a hard word against the feelings of corrupt nature. But we have to announce the doctrine of our blessed Lord, who, on many occasions, uttered the following anathema: “Woe to the world, because of scandals.” Hence, we ought to arouse public attention, now and then, upon the multiplied abuses of society.

The subject of our instruction to-day, shall be Modesty.

Modesty, beloved faithful, is virtue by which the 208 exterior is regulated with decency and decorum; by it, according to the example of Jesus Christ, everything should be properly ruled in our exterior, our eyes, our tongue, our dress and manners.

Our eyes are, as it were, two windows, by which light or darkness is communicated to our soul; they may cause the fatal ruin of our heart, and be also to others an instrument of scandal.

Fully convince of this truth was the holy patriarch Job, when he said: “I have made a covenant with my eyes, that I would not so much as to think upon a virgin.”

Listen also to this advice of the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of Ecclesiasticus: “Gaze not upon a maiden, lest her beauty be a stumbling block to thee. Turn thy face from a woman

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dressed up, and gaze not upon another's beauty. For many have perished by the beauty of a woman and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire."

Be modest, watch and pray, if not, woe to you! Your eyes shall betray your heart and cause your ruin, according to these words of Jesus Christ: "I say to you that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart."

These heavenly lessons are literally illustrated by two conspicuous examples read in the Holy Scripture. The first in the person of a great king and prophet, David, who, seduced by his imprudent looks at Urias' wife, became afterwards guilty of the double crime of adultery and murder. The second, no less remarkable, proves that old age itself is no guarantee, no security against such a disgraceful fall. Who has not heard the history of those two ancients, of those two judges of the people, who had free access to the house and orchard of Joakim, the spouse of chaste and virtuous Suzanna. Their immodest looks poisoned their hearts and plunged them into a abyss of iniquities; and because she feared God and would not give her consent, preferring death itself, she was accused by them before the people and condemned to die. But, glory to God! heaven could not see such abominable crimes on one side and such eminent virtue on the other, without taking hold of the 209 curse and casting it upon the two monsters of iniquity, and at the same time delivering and crowning with glory Suzanna, the chaste wife, the perfect woman.

A third example of the danger caused by the immodesty of the eye is likewise offered to the reflection of those who might think that the sex has nothing to fear from such imprudent wantonness. We read in Genesis that Putiphar's wife, having cast her eyes on Joseph, conceived such criminal passions in her heart that she forgot her rank, her duty, and used every means to bring the holy young man to a most horrible crime. But Joseph loved God and feared Him, and consequently preferred rather to expose himself to all kinds of sufferings in this life, than to offend Him.

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Hence, to keep our hearts pure, we ought to pray and watch over our eyes and practice the virtue of modesty.

Our behavior and manners are also to be ruled by prudence and modesty. We must endeavor to let nothing indecent or light appear in our conduct. Gravity, candor, affability, kindness, ought to be the ornaments of our countenance, as they are the best marks of a good education and sound virtue.

Study, then, to be modest in all circumstances and in all places; with superiors because you owe them respect, and with equals and inferiors because you must give them edification and good example. Be modest, even when alone, on account of your guardian angel's presence, and more so of God, who sees all your actions.

“Let your modesty be known to all men; the Lord is nigh.” This command of the Apostle ought to be chiefly understood of our behavior in the church, in the house of prayer, wherein is kept the tabernacle of the living God. “To enter the house of God as a profane house, without respect and modesty; gazing about, speaking without necessity, laughing; to be there in an unbecoming posture, lolling upon the seats, an other like irreverences, are sins which offend God,” says a pious author, “more than the generality of people imagine.”

Be modest and watch in the midst of your children; many times children have received at home, the first impressions of evil, and shall have to accuse, as murderers of their souls, the very authors of their life. Let your conduct be to them a continual lesson of modesty.

Allow in your house no immodest book or paper, no immodest painting or picture, no immodest statue—production of unchaste minds, so apt to convey the seed of corruption, the seed of moral and spiritual death, even in the most pure hearts. But have always for the use of your children and yourselves good books the reading of which will inspire them

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and you with good thoughts, good affections, good desires; adorn the walls of your rooms with paintings or pictures of Jesus Christ, of the blessed Virgin Mary, and other saints; the sight of which will convey to your minds lessons of modesty, purity, patience, and obedience to the will of God in all things.

Modesty regards dress also, wherein you must avoid superfluous ornaments, which are tokens of a vain and light mind, and dangerous to chaste eyes. Be modestly dressed or clothed, according to your condition and means, without trying to equal those who are far above you. “Glory not in apparel at any time,” says the Holy Ghost, “for it is vain glory.”

All the Fathers of the Church have strenuously condemned immodest dresses. St. Jerome calls young persons, who curl and trick up themselves wantonly, “the pest of modesty.” And I do not find this holy Father too severe—when I read in the first Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy the following advice: “In like manner, women also in decent apparel: adorning themselves with modesty and sobriety, and not with plaited hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly attire, but as it becometh women professing godliness with good works.”

To these words of St. Paul let me add also an advice of St. Petter, particularly addressed to married women: “Whose adorning,” says the Prince of the Apostles, “let it not be the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel, but the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God.”

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O, beloved hearers, what a difference between the wise doctrine of the Apostles and that of the world!

Pagans and others, not followers of Jesus Christ, were extremely vain in their apparel, in their costly ornaments and immodest dresses, and this is the reason which induced St. Peter and St. Paul to forewarn Christians against scandals highly condemned by Jesus

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and His cross, in order to prevent amongst them contagion of s pernicious a custom, so bad an example.

How much stronger would be their condemnation of such scandals, were these great Apostles amongst us witnessing the luxury, the vain attire, the indecent dressed, the light conduct and manners of so many followers of Christ of our days, who are ashamed to His cross and Christian modesty; of Christian modesty, which ought to be woman's greatest ornament, as also the glory and delight of all the disciples of Jesus Christ.

If you have a wise and regulated mind, it will appear by the modesty of your exterior, according to these words of the Holy Ghost: "A man is known by his looks, and a wise man, when thou meetest him, by his countenance. The attire of the body and the laughter of the teeth and the gait of a man shows what he is."

Show what you are, but let it be by your modesty, by simple, humble and unassuming manners. Remember that the exterior is a copy of the interior, and the face, being the mirror of the soul, ought to be radiant with modesty.

If you have a truly chaste heart and a real idea of virtue, you will despise all vain ornaments, all excess of attire as scandalous and ridiculous in Christians.

Is it to reform God's own that you gather around your head so many trinkets and flowers? Do you not repudiate, by so many and so skillfully combined niceties, Jesus Christ, whose sacred head was crowned with thorns?

Observe modesty in your words, dearly beloved, for the wise man says, that "by the tongue wisdom is discerned."

Never speak a word ill or impertinent, but speak with wisdom and at a proper time. Never utter a wanton or indecent word, but edify others by your conversation. Avoid 212 as a real plague, all unchaste discourses, the pest and corruption of good morals; do not use

dubious expressions, expressions of double meaning, which might give occasion to evil thoughts. Shun all indecent language, all scurrilous words, which some sort of men, vulgar and mean, have frequently in their mouths.

Besides, be discreet even or indifferent subjects; be the last in speaking and the first in holding silence, interrupting no one, meddling with no other's business. Learn before you speak, and always speak with a prudent forecasts, and let circumspection, at all times, guide your lips.

These few remarks upon a matter of the greatest importance will induce you, I hope, to make some wholesome resolutions; and may the blessing of God reform your exterior, until you have acquired the modesty of the saints, together with their reward, the object of my wish unto you. In the name of the Father, *** Amen.

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No. V. * Extract from a Letter of Bossuet to Father Caffaro on the Theatre—Bossuet Complains to Him of a Letter Published Under His Name, on the Theatre—He Shows Him all the Vices and Dangers of Theatrical Performances.

* Translated from the French over fifteen years ago by Father Ravoux. See *œuvres choisies* of Bossuet, vol. 5, page 258.

It is to yourself, Rev. Father, that I will first address, secretly between you and me, according to the precept of the gospel, my complaints against a letter, in the form of a dissertation on the theatre, which all constantly attribute to you and which I was lately assured you had avowed. No matter if you are not the author of it, all I ask is a mere denial; and then it is no more to you I speak. If you have written the letter, I complain to yourself, as a Christian to a Christian, and as a brother to a brother.

I will not lose time in answering the authorities of St. Thomas and other saints, who seem to approve or tolerate theatrical representations, since you agree, and it cannot be denied, that the plays they have allowed are none of those that are contrary to morality.

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The first thing I reprove is that you have said, and repeated, that the theatre, as it is now-a-days, has nothing contrary to morals. We ought then to consider as chaste the impieties and infamies filling up the comedies of Moliere. Reflect, also, whether you judge worthy of your habit, and of the name of Christian, all the maxims of love, all the sweet invitations which resound everywhere in the operas of Quinault, whom, one hundred times, I have seen deploring his errors. But to-day you justify what was the cause of 214 his penance and of his just regrets, when he made serious reflections on his salvation; and you are compelled, according to your maxims, to declare that these sentiments, by which corrupt nature is so dangerously flattered, should be yet more inflamed by songs which breathe only effeminacy.

Lulli, in order to excel in his art, adapted the accents of his singers, men and women, to their recitals and verses; and his airs, so much repeated in the world, are good only to insinuate the most deceitful passions, by rendering them as agreeable as possible.

It is useless to answer that people are occupied only with the singing and representation, without thinking of the meaning of the words, or of the sentiments expressed by them; for precisely therein is the danger that, whilst they are charmed with the sweetness of the melody, and become thoughtless by the marvel of the spectacle, these sentiments are instilled inadvertently, and gain the heart without being perceived. And, even without giving such help to inclinations already too powerful, if you say that the simple representation of agreeable passions in the tragedies of Corneille and Racine is not pernicious to modesty, you contradict the latter, who has publicly repudiated the tenderness of his "Berenice," whom I name, as being the first coming to my mind; and you, a priest, a Theatin, you bring him back to his former errors.

You say that these representations of agreeable passions excite them only indirectly, by chance and by accident. But on the contrary there is nothing more direct or more essential in these plays, than that which is the formal design of the authors, actors and hearers. Tell me what is the object of Corneille in his "Cid," but that they love Chimene, that they adore

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her with Rodrigue, that they tremble with him, when he is in fear of losing her, and that they feel happy with him, when he hopes to possess her? If the author of a tragedy does not know how to interest the spectator, to move him, to transport him with the passion which he wishes to express, what is thought of him? He is cold, he is tiresome, he is insufferable. *****

If even immodest pictures produce in us naturally what they express, and since, for this reason, the use of them is condemned; and if people never relish them so much as when, according to the wish of the artist, they enter into the spirit he was animated with and place themselves, in some manner, under the same impressions; how much more touched will they be with the expression on the stage, where all appear effective, where features are not dead features, colors are not dry colors, but living persons, real eyes, ardent or tender, and steeped in passion; real tears in the actors, which draw other tears from the spectators; in fine, real motions, that set on fire the whole pit and all the boxes? And all that, you say, moves indirectly, and excites the passions but by accident.

Will you say, also, that discourses tending to kindle such flames, that excite youth to love, as if they were not already foolish enough; that make them envy the state of birds and beasts, which are never troubled in their passions, and complain against reason and modesty, so importune, and so constraining; will you say that all these things, and a hundred others of the same kind, resounding in all theatres, excite the passions only by accident; whilst all proclaim that they are well adapted to stir them up, and that if they do not obtain their object, the rules of art are frustrated, and the authors labor in vain.

Pray, what does an actor do in order to represent a passion, but recall those he has felt, and which, if he were a Christian, he would have drowned in tears of penance, so that they could not have returned to his mind, except to inspire him with horror? But no; for in order to express the passions, they must be reproduced with all their poisonous charms, with all their deceitful illusions.

But all that, you say, appears on the stage as a weakness. I grant it; but as a good, a noble weakness, as the weakness of heroes and heroines; in fine, as a weakness so changed into virtue that it is admired, applauded in all theatres; in such sort that it must make an essential part of public delights; so that the audience not only cannot endure a play without it, but cannot suffer that it should not pervade and animated the whole performance.

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Will you say, my Father, that all those circumstances do not stir up directly and by themselves the fire of lust, and that lust is not bad; that there is nothing repugnant to modesty and to good morals in keeping it alive; or that this fire heats but indirectly, and that it is only by accident that the ardor of evil desires springs up from the midst of these flame? Will you say that the modesty of a young girl is only offended by accident, by all the discourses in which a person of her sex speaks of her combats, in which she avows her defeat and avows it to her conqueror? What is not seen in the world, a young girl will learn it at the theatre; she will see it in a young lady represented as modest, chaste, virtuous; in a word, in a heroine; and that avowal, which makes one blush secretly, is judged proper to be revealed to the public, and to bear away, as a new prodigy, the applause of all the spectators. ****

You compare these dangers in which persons are placed at the theatre, by a lively representation of the passions, to those which cannot be avoided, you say, but by flying to the deserts. They cannot, you add, take a step, read a book, enter a church, in fine live in the world, without encountering a thousand things capable of exciting the passions. No doubt the conclusion is very good; we are surrounded by inevitable dangers; therefore we ought to increase the number! All creatures are a snare and a temptation to man; therefore it is allowed to invent new temptations, and new snares to close souls! There are evil conversations which cannot be avoided, according to St. Paul, except by leaving the world; therefore there is no sin in willingly seeking evil conversations; and the Apostle

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must have been mistaken in saying that “evil conversations corrupt good morals!” This is, dear Father, your conclusion. All the objects which are presented to our eyes may excite our passions; therefore, we may prepare with care exquisite and extraordinary ones in order to excite them and render them more agreeable by disguise; we may recommend such perils, and plays which are so much more full of them, inasmuch as they are better composed and performed, are not to be ranked among evil conversations by which good morals are corrupted. 217 Rather say, my dear Father: There are in the world so many unavoidable perils, that therefore we ought not to multiply them. God helps us in temptations, which present themselves of necessity; but He easily abandons those who seek them by choice; and “he that loves danger”—He does not say: he that is in danger by necessity; but he that loves and seeks it—“shall perish in it.” *** If men do not perceive these dangers, it is the duty of priests to instruct them, and not to flatter them. Where shall they find knowledge, if the lips of the priest, charged to preserve it, are corrupted? To whom shall they apply for the law of God, if those who are the teachers of it give authority to vices, as says St. Cyprian?***

The “Canticle of Canticles” breathes only a heavenly love; and yet, because it is represented under the figure of human love, the perusal of it was forbidden to youth. But people fear not, now-a-days, to see lovers courting, for the sole pleasure of seeing them in love and feeling the sweetness of a foolish passion.***

Banish, banish these illusions, or revoke or disown a letter that dishonors your character, your habit, and your holy order; in which letter, indeed, they give you the name of theologian without being able to give you theologians to approve it, but only comic poets; in fine, a letter that dares not to appear, except as a preface to theatrical pieces. In a public scandal, which indeed I was at liberty to combat with less consideration, I begin to reprimand you, between you and me, in order to observe towards a religious of an order which brings honor to the priesthood, the full measure of Christian sweetness. If you do not listen to me, I will call for witnesses; I will advise your superior. At last, after having

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used all the means suggested by charity, I will tell the Church; I will speak as a bishop against your perverse doctrine. I am however, etc.

Bossuet, at the request of some devout and learned persons, wrote also a dissertation on the same subject, in the beginning of which we see the good effect of his letter to Father Caffaro, for he speaks of it as follows:

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“The religious to whom had been attributed the letter in defense of theatrical plays, has satisfied the public by a disavowal no less humble than solemn. The ecclesiastical authority has made itself acknowledged; by its cares, truth has been vindicated; sound doctrine is out of danger, and the public wants only instruction on a matter that some persons had endeavored to embroil by vain reasons, it is true, and which should be but worthy of contempt, if it were allowed to despise the perils of weak souls; but which, in fine, dazzle the people of the world, always easily deceived on subjects that flatter them.”***

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No. VI. “The Decollete in Modern Life,” by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps—A Plea for Modesty by the “St. Paul Pioneer Press,” August 17, 1890.

“The Decollete in Modern Life,” an article which appeared in “The Forum” for August, 1890, has induced the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* to publish another article, entitled, “A Plea for Modesty,” wherein it gives due praises to Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, the author of “The Decollete in Modern Life.” We have read both articles with pleasure, and think them very important and fit to induce many to a change of customs and manners in society, and create a public opinion against whatever is improper, indecent in literature, in paintings, in dress, in conversation, etc. In order to corroborate what has been said in our book on Modesty, Romances, Theatres, ect., we will add in it a greater portion of the article of the *Pioneer Press*.

A PLEA FOR MODESTY.

Only a woman, and a woman of the fine mental and spiritual fiber of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, could write such an article as that which appears in the last number of the Forum, under the title of "The Decollete in Modern Life." It is a plea for modesty; a protest against the demoralizing tendencies now at work in literature, dramatic art and social usages and customs. Nor do we believe that the voice of the one who asks for the preservation of delicacy in thought and life is heard one moment too soon, or is 220 raised in an unworthy cause. Circumstances have conspired to make this an age of unwonted liberty of speech and action in provinces which have been guarded, since modern civilization came into being, by the angel of the flaming sword. It is an age of revolt and emancipation. Pretty much all human progress comes by the alternation and counterplay of extremes.***

It is not long since we had occasion to deal with one aspect of the question, in connection with the proscription of the "Kreutzer Sonata." The quality of our current literature is from a moral point of view, frightfully demoralizing. Not that there are not more good books than ever before, but there are also more in circulation which are absolutely unfit for perusal, and which cannot pass into the hands of a young girl without exactly the same danger as lies in association with women impure character. We are singularly indifferent to this. We pass by the fact that the average young woman reads and discusses with her male friends, books which could not have been so much as referred to twenty years ago; not because they are openly immoral, but because they deal with facts and situations that cannot be dwelt upon in mind or conversation without a sacrifice of modesty. Yet such books form a very large portion of the offerings to the public to-day. Nor less marked, we think, is the deterioration of the stage. *** Yet it is pretty nearly impossible in these days to carry through a dramatic performance of any quality without the assistance of the woman in tights. And this is the most venial of the offenses of the stage, where allusion and innuendo and the suggestion of situation and plot convey ideas that are a thousand times more startling than a vision of twinkling limbs.***

These fields are more familiar. It is when the eloquent writer of the article referred to touches the subject of modern dress that she speaks with the authority of a woman to other women, and that her blows are the severest and the best deserved. The failings of literature and art are but a reflection, to her mind, of that more awful crime against modesty which is shared by women of the world everywhere, 221 and which supplies the title for her passionate protest. There is no appeal from the declaration which serves as her text. "It is a fact, gloss it anyhow as we may, that decent women have never dressed so indecently in our country and our century as they do in fashionable life to-day." *** If your costume is coarse and vulgar, you can blame no voice or pen which calls you a coarse and vulgar too. If the dress is disgraceful, the wearer is disgraced. The woman who dresses indecently—never mind who, never mind where, never mind why—is indecent. The woman who dresses without shame is shameless." It is for a woman, and a woman only, to use such words to her own sex. ***

The fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, is placed abundantly before the lips of every daughter of Eve in this generation. The wise would not have it different; but they would have modesty guarded as sacredly as virtue. The philosophy of it all lies in the serious conclusion of our censor. "Our sense of superior delicacy is, after all, a tremendous moral support. Many of us would rather be called criminal than coarse. To be known as unrefined is the pit of social degradation. Convince the half-nude waltzing woman that she is not a lady, but a savage, and she will cloth herself and invent a new dance. Convince the writer of indelicate literature that he is not an artist, but a savage, and he will burn his manuscript and discover a new literary fashion. Let us draw the lines clearly, and having done that, let us abide by them. Society always respects her own restrictions, no matter how she may treat those of a higher and truer life. Make it fashionable to be decent, and the day is won."

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No. VII. A FEW WORDS OF ADVICE.

If some find that the instruction contained in our book is too rigid for the spirit of the age in which we live, we will answer them: Reflect seriously on these words of Christ: "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?"—Matt.xvi.26. Yes; reflect upon them and you will understand, with the grace of God, that all is vanity here upon earth, except to love Him and to be faithful to all His precepts, for He, alone, can render you happy forever, whilst all the riches, all the pleasures, all the honor and glory of this life will soon have vanished away like a dream. If we desire to know the truth, as we shall see it after our departure from this life—*Sursum corda!*—let us invoke with humility the Spirit of Light, the Holy Ghost. We cannot too often ask His divine assistance by reciting the following hymn of the Church of God: *VENI, CREATOR SPIRITUS*. Come, Holy Ghost, Creator, come From thy bright heavenly throne! Come, take possession of our souls, And make them Thy own! Thou who art called the Paraclete, Best gift of God above, The Living Spring, the Living Fire, Sweet Unction, and True Love! 223 Thou who art seven-fold in Thy grace, Finger of God's right hand, His promises teaching little ones To speak and to understand! O, guide our minds with Thy blest light, With love our hearts inflame, And with Thy strength, which ne'er decays, Confirm our mortal frame. Far from us drive our hellish foe, True peace unto us bring, And through all perils guide us safe Beneath Thy sacred wing. Through Thee may we the Father know, Through Thee the Eternal Son, And Thee, the Spirit of them both— Thrice-blessed three in one! All glory to the Father be, With His co-equal Son; The same to Thee, O Paraclete, While endless ages run. Amen. *Deo gratias!*

Translation taken from the "Garden of the Soul."

See Roman Breviary, vol. I. page 543.

LB O '23